

SHROPSHIRE RIDING AND CARRIAGE DRIVING FORUM (SRCDF)

Minutes of meeting held on Monday 14th October 2019, at 5.30pm, Shirehall, Shrewsbury.

1. Attendance:

Zia Robins, Shrewsbury & District RC A&BWO, Nesscliffe Hills & Dist. BWA P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Acting Chairman. Linda Russell, South West Shrewsbury BW P3 Group, Joint Secretary. Nino Binns, Long Mynd & Dist BWA. Sue Evans, Ryton, Badger & Beckbury BWs. Jan Mees Robinson, Telford Bridleways.

Apologies:

Angela Williams, BHS CABO & Ellesmere, Chairman Pam Yuille, Underton, Bridgnorth. Andrew Kelly, Vyrnwy & Dist. BWA. Gill Eyre, BHS South East Shropshire., Ann Durnell, Bridgnorth BWA. Elaine Newton, Broseley BWA. Mark Weston BHS. Shona Butter, Shropshire Council.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 10th June 2019 (paper A) were approved, and signed by the Acting Chairman.

3. Matters Arising

(a) Helicopters

Squadron Leader Kim Leach, the Corporate Engagement Relations Officer at RAF Shawbury, kim.leach347@mod.gov.uk reports that they are still waiting for the tender process to be completed for a new contract to supply high viz kit. RAF Shawbury provided the new Cavalier RDA Centre at Much Wenlock with some high viz kit shortly after they opened, and are sending one of their courses to complete a community project there.

Ron Repath has reported that there have been problems involving Helicopters low flying over Forestry Commission Lodge Hill Woods near Frodesley, where there is a designated landing site next to the Plantation, and where there are riding routes including a SC promoted Ride Shropshire route. Ron has been told by RAF Shawbury that now the RAF have the new twin engine Juno & Jupiter helicopters, they are permitted to circle over woodland whilst accessing a landing site. The previous single engine Squirrel could not do this in case of engine failure. Some helicopters have been circling three times. Horse riders even when wearing high viz, cannot always be seen in the woodland, and repeated circling can upset horses. Members raised concern over this new development, which RAF Shawbury have not notified us of. Some years ago, Zia marked up all the RAF's landing site maps for them, with details of all the then public horse-riding routes near their landing sites. They agreed at that time to consult on any new sites offered to them. No new landing sites have been reported to us or SC recently. Nino reported low flying giving concern at Dugeley Farm. Sue reported problems with low flying right over the village of Beckbury. A landing site given by a landowner right on a Bridleway there was closed, following complaints passed on through this Forum's Helicopter Liaison Committee.

(b) Cycling – Mountain Biking (MTB' s)

Extracts from this Forum's February minutes have been quoted from in the Shropshire Star with regard to problems caused by mountain bikers at Nesscliffe Countryside Heritage Park. The fencing erected around the Hill Fort at Nesscliffe does seem to be deterring MTB's but that they are still using other footpaths and routes there, and making 'wild' tracks down onto bridleways. A cycle website lists 'Best Mountain Biking Trails in Shropshire' They include fast routes

around the County, including at Eastridge, The Long Mynd, Haughmond, Stiperstones, Mortimer Forest etc. One at Haughmond includes a steep fast slope, and states 'walkers use it'. Some websites post times taken, encouraging cyclists to race to beat these. Linda reported that horse riders have to contend with bikes flying out of the woods at Eastridge across Bridleways. This puts off horse riders going there especially at weekends. Nino reported too fast MTB's on the Long Mynd.

Following the request from Mark Weston on National Cycle Network routes suitable for horse riding, Sue has again told the BHS of the Wyre Forest old railway line section of R45 6-9. She has ridden it since 1968. Concern was raised as some bridleways have been used for the National Cycle Network and then signed by them with just cycling and walking signs.

(c) Natural England Permissive Bridleway Routes

Noted - that the NE Permissive routes at Church Farm nr. Bridgnorth, Land near Detton nr. Cleobury Mortimer, and Walton Farm, nr Cleobury Mortimer have all now ended and that Manor House Farm, Craven Arms ends on 31st Dec 2019. The remaining 6 routes all close in 2020, including in February the 4 mile one at Uckington & Wheathall Farms which links to the Bishop Bennett Way, and on Sept 30th 2020 the 4.3 miles at Rednal Farm near West Felton which we got extended for 10 years, will close. The list of these was sent out with the 4th Feb 2019 Agenda. These will be a great loss, especially in areas where there is little off-road riding. Sue reported that riders now pay to use a former Defra Permissive route in Staffordshire.

(d) Ironbridge Power Station Site Development

Noted – the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership paper item 8 'Ironbridge Power Satation Site Redevelopment, and the Ironbridge Redevelopment Team's 'Extension of Buildwas Sand Quarry: The Former Ironbridge Power Station' which were circulated by email on 7th Oct 2019. Shona reports that the developers have been made fully aware of the existing PROW in this vicinity and linking claims. Initial feedback has been positive, and that this is an opportunity to reconnect the higher status network in this area.

Jan reported that it is a Restricted Byway right from the main road and on towards Broseley. There are also reports that the railway line will be reopened, so it is important that there are new connecting routes away from it.

There are planned development sites at Tong and Ternhill as well as at Ironbridge.

(e) Drones and Unmanned Agricultural Machinery

Noted – The BHS advice paper on Drones, attached to the Agenda. Concern was raised over the possible impact on off-road public riding routes from increased use of Drones for agriculture. Also discussed was the possible impact of Unmanned Agricultural Machinery now being developed at places like Harpur Adams. There was concern that an unmanned sprayer, or other machinery, would not spot a horse rider, as a manned one would. Zia has raised this with the BHS but has been told that they have no guidance on this at present.

(f) Ploughing and Cropping

Montford Parish BW 20 - Humphrey Kynaston Montford Circular – There has been repeat ploughing and cropping of this bridleway for some years now. Shona reports that she has now spoken directly with the tenant farmer, and made the position clear over his responsibilities. He should have cleared the root crop planted on the field edge bridleway, and have left the required width for the bridleway. If this has not happened, she will take further action. She hoped to visit in person, but has not been able to do so as yet. She reports that most of the other ploughing and cropping reports are on footpaths. The crops were still in place last night.

Sue reported they had suffered from cross field ploughing of ROW in their area, and with potatoes planted on them. They have negotiated a number of field edge BW diversion. With a good 3m width, suitable surface, and grass mowed regularly, these routes can be a benefit to all.

(g) Any other matters arising not on the Agenda - There were no other matters arising.

4. Shropshire Council

(a) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships

Shona reports that Lucy will be off work for some weeks due to a badly broken leg, and Emily will not be back from maternity leave before next spring. Jean and Lucy would both like to retire soon, which will be a loss of 60 years of experience. Clare Fildes has recently married, and is now Clare Featherstone. She is now Interim Head of Culture and Heritage. Pete Banford is now managing the Outdoor Partnerships Team 3 days a week, and Shona is hoping to recruit an Officer prior to Lucy and Jean retiring. Helen Foxhall does one day a week for ROW. Helen Beresford supports P3 Volunteers. The P3 Volunteers Day at Cockshutt was very well attended. Some of our Forum members attended and reported it was an excellent day.

Sue has still had no response to issues she has reported. She was advised that with the current staff situation, there was a limit to what could be done. All issues get logged, but Health & Safety issues take priority.

Noted - that the Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships and Volunteer Newsletters are available on www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk website on the Home page under 'Useful Links' – 'News', And that ROW problems etc. can be reported direct to outdoor.recreation@shropshire.gov.uk.

(b) Public Inquiries and Definitive Map Issues

Zia reported that a new loop Bridleway off BW 40, to replace the now fenced off linear Permissive Bridleway to the Tea Tents Picnic area on Nesscliffe Hill, has now been Dedicated by Shropshire Council as Public Bridleway 0419/UN16.

Shona reported on ongoing issues:

Shifnal FP4 upgrade for Sabrina Way – Shona did discuss this with Lucy, and will get back on this. Sue reported it was addressed in 2004 and needs to be resubmitted which she will do.

Frodesley Lodge BW0417/4 & BW0417/UN1 – The Diversion routes are all now confirmed, and Shona has given instructions to Richard Knight to open up the new line of the routes. RK reports that he has received instructions to open up the routes, and hopes to address this soon.

Bentley Ford Farm BW 0417/7R – This is still waiting for Paul Butter to look at this.

Hanwood Railway crossing – There is still no update on the recording of the correct status for the railway crossing, which was changed from UCR to Bridleway under a Railway Act, but not changed on the Definitive Map. Lucy is dealing with this. We need to watch out for any changes.

Old Coalport to Bridgnorth Railway Line and Link – Sweeney Bridge. This is still with Lucy.

Stiperstones Higher Access Route – Natural England are against the waymarking of routes there, and there were problems getting signage there for the Shropshire Way. Helen Beresford was trying to re-engage on this with Natural England.

Oaks Wood BW claim – Shona reported that she needs to contact the Agent for the Landowners in order to move the line amendment and claim forward, but has not been able to as she is having to deal with all issues due to the current staffing situation. The link across the stream to Habberley which was well used was left out of the claim. An old map shows old roads there.

Drumbles BW outlet to Platt Bridge claim – There are still no staff to deal with this Order, which has been waiting for many years for the last section of BW to be confirmed.

Weston Woods BW claims - The order to add footpaths has been published and objection received. Details of the diverted outlet of **RB 0232/4** to the road, used by vehicles, but only registered as a FP – **FP 0219/4Y**, and the link to, and the outlet of, **RB 0219/1** on the opposite side of the A49 road, also only registered as a footpath, **FP 0232/UN1**, but which should both be Restricted Byways from the A49, will be looked at by Emily on her return to work.

Sutton Mill – The Order is nearly ready, but it is still not too late to submit any new evidence.

Hilton BW claim – No change. Unlikely to be dealt with for some time due to work pressures.

Bishops Castle, Banks Head, RB Addition – Lucy is waiting for information from Powys and clarification from the Planning Inspectorate on the Order, which was objected to by the TRF.

Adderley BW addition – Following objections to the BW Order it is waiting to go the Planning Inspectorate for determination. They are currently trying to negotiate an alternative for the footpath before sending these off, but this will also have to wait for enough staff to deal with it.

Taddymoor Lane, Hopesay nr Craven Arms – New evidence is still needed.

Linley Estate northern outlet for UCR URS U5999/10 – Lucy is looking into the outlet to the UCR, which just stops on a gate onto Linley Drive. Two public footpaths also just end on the Drive. Lucy has made contact with the new owners, but Shona is not aware of the outcome. The two dead end BW's 0550/10 & 0562/9 ending on the public footpath up Linley Hill were raised. The later stops just short of Cold Hill Farm. The footpath must have been a higher status route.

Colebatch – BOAT claim – Lucy is dealing with this. It is likely that it will be sent off to the Planning Inspectorate.

Baschurch Station Yard Bridleway – Shona has not had time yet to look at the outlet south to Eyton Lane of the historic bridleway, which is now shown on the new line through on the granted plans for the Planning Application for the new estate. Old documents show the route as being owned by the Surveyor of Highways.

(c) Shropshire Outdoor Partnerships Implementation Team

Richard Knight reports that they have a full team at the moment, and will be employing an extra, new Maintenance Officer very soon to help. This is part of the restructure from when Mark Blount left. They now have the new gates, and work is completed on **BW0437/10 Upton Magna Diversion**. Annual clearance has been good with more done than last year. They have worked with Carl Stanton to clear Gipsy Lane, Montford, part of the Humphrey Kynaston Way. They are currently trying to sort out the byways at **Pennerley** that are experiencing serious flooding events every time it rains. It needs lots of drainage and surfacing there to try and improve the situation. Zia reported that due to exceptional growth some routes have had to be topped twice this year.

Sansaw BW 0210/31 There is no progress reported on the problems there.

Nesscliffe BW0419/25 B – Shona and Richard have still not been able to arrange a meeting with the landowner to look at the dug away definitive bridleway route, and the dangerous alternative provided, so a safe through route cannot be waymarked.

Adcote Mill Bridge BW 0202/54 linking BW0202/UN3 & BW 0425/54 and opening up of adjoining Ford 0202/UN3. Shona reports that there have been hold ups due to the Engineers leaving, new ones having to be appointed, and to restrictions on when work can be done in the River Perry. Funding is in place, and SC report that work will be done between July and October 2020. The bridge will now be repaired to maintain the look and style of the original structure, to retain the character and visual look of the area, and the Ford will be reinstated. Letters have now gone out to all interested parties notifying them of this.

Melverley RB1 - drainage. This is still waiting to be dealt with when staff are available.

Concern was raised that a number of field gates on Public Riding routes still have low down pull spring bars, which protrude from the gate and can injure a horse or rider passing through. SC had a policy many years ago to replace all these pull bars with loop closures.

(d) Shropshire Council Planning

Planning Applications - Members are asked to check and respond to any Planning Applications in their area that might impact on off-road riding routes, promoted routes, and on the lanes used to connect routes. on <http://planningpa.shropshire.gov.uk/online-applications>.

Concern was raised again over Planning Applications impacting on Public ROW still not being correctly advertised by SC's Planning Department, and cases of SC ROW not being consulted.

BW 44 Baschurch - Following the reported case of obstruction in Baschurch Parish on **FP0202/57**, the historic outlet to the east for **BW0202/44**, which will be a lost way claim, Shona

has now spoken to the landowner, and is waiting for him to get back to her re a diversion. This is the case where Permitted Development of an Agricultural Barn 18/02127/AGR was granted over the public footpath, with the condition that the path must first be diverted. The barn was then built over the public footpath, with no diversion taking place. This only came to light when a further application was submitted, and granted, for an anaerobic digester to the east of the barn, 19/00526/FUL, also impacting on the footpath. This should have been enforced by Planning.

Planning Application 19/04231/FUL Restricted Byway 0310/27A Brogyntyn Hall, Oswestry RB27A, open to carriage drivers as well as walkers and cyclists, leaves the main road and goes through a field gate alongside a cattle grid and then follows the main drive to the Hall. The Application has not been advertised as impacting on a Public ROW, yet the Application to reconstruct the entrance piers, gates etc to Brogyntyn Hall, only provides for foot access, and not riding or carriage driving, alongside the cattle grid. The Application Statement also includes plans to divert the Public ROW, which they wrongly identify as a footpath, off the main open entrance Drive onto a too narrow fenced and hedged route to the north. Shona has reported that Kate has been told by the agent that they will not divert the route.

Agreed – That Zia will write a response on behalf of the Forum objecting to this Application.

17/05554/FUL Hall Bank, Pontesford - Link route to old RW line – Zia has raised with ROW the lack of a multi user link from the internal estate road to the SC owned multi user disused old railway line. The only link route shown on the plans is a ‘footpath link to disused railway path.

19/01574/FUL Weston Under Redcastle – Application for 3 safari tents, very large 20m x 6.8m wooden structures, with access to be up the Public Bridleway, have been withdrawn following a number of objections including from local horse riders, and from Angela on behalf of the BHS, and Zia on behalf of the NHDBA P3 Group.

Crematorium Nesscliffe - Planning Refused – Concern was raised to Planning over the impact on Nesscliffe Countryside Heritage Park, local lanes used to link routes there, and on the old A5, which is part of the Humphrey Kynaston Way SC promoted long distance bridleway route.

NOTED - Kate Nore, kate.nore@shropshire.gov.uk deals with all the Searches and Planning Applications, so one person sees it all through. She consults with the area ROW Officers.

(e) Shropshire Council Highways

Local Transport Plan – there is no news yet of any consultation on the new plan. Shona has told us she will keep us informed of progress.

North West Relief Road and Oxon Relief Road

There is to be a public meeting on this at the Guildhall on 17th Oct organised by a campaign group, with local and national experts speaking on the NW Relief Road plans, which Zia hopes to attend. Shona has sent a link re the NWRR, which includes plans. Zia was involved with the original consultation on this when she ensured the parallel route was multi user including horses.

<https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/roads-and-highways/shrewsbury-north-west-relief-road/>

Flax Mill stopping up order on UCR outlet to BW 0443/UN52, and provision of only a ‘Proposed Cycle Route’ and pedestrian outlet on the line of the UCR - We have still not had a response from Mark Wootton of SC Highways on this. Shona reports that he needs to be chased up on this.

Port Way UCR U5549/10 - Linda reported that the old stoned green lane, with a central grass strip that horse riders used, leading from the main road north of Picklescott to the first field gate, mostly used by the farmer to get to his fields, and an important historic leisure route, has now all been smooth tarmacked. She asks why money has been spent on surfacing this green lane, especially when busy country lanes are in such poor condition.

Chapel Lane, Yorton. UCR U2527/10 – Still no change on the incorrect signing of this UCR.

Old Moors Lane UCR U1019/20 St. Martins – No update on progress in opening up this route.

5. Claiming Lost Ways

Noted – the <https://www.bhsaccess.org.uk/dobbin/Project2026.php> website

Shona has reported that following Will Steel, the BHS Project 2026 Officer, attending our last meeting, and his demonstration of the new BHS Project 2026 Website, she had discussions with him over the possibility of the BHS putting in the formal claims for all the higher status routes identified under the Discovering Lost Ways Project, which SC have case files for. This will ensure that they are protected. Will is looking into the best way of doing this. It may be via local volunteers if they are prepared to do it, or he may get a consultant to do them. It has not been decided yet. Shona said that routes investigated as part of the Discovering Lost Ways Project will not need to be claimed, and any user evidence for these can be sent to SC ROW. Concerns were raised over these routes not being claimed. There was also concern raised over the methods of sending documents, evidence etc. Zia confirmed that she sent marked up digital maps and documents for the Frodesley Inquiry, but it was a lot of work. Sue said she would do her claims the old-fashioned way. Cross border routes can pose difficulties as Counties have different prioritisation systems. It was noted that the online BHS site has lots of entries for Angela's area, but not clear who has been putting these on.

It is agreed that we take up Shona's offer of providing a map to mark on areas covered. This could be dealt with at a separate meeting from the Forum meeting, to just focus on Lost Ways.

NOTED - Highways and Landowners Statements and Declarations, Formal Applications & Public Path Orders are available through 'Useful Links' on the right side of the home page of www.shropshiresgreatoutdoors.co.uk click on 'Access & Rights of Way' to access these.

6. Minutes and Feedback from SGOSB and other Forums

Noted – the Minutes of the Shropshire's Great Outdoors Strategy Board meeting held on 6th June 2019, and the Agenda for the meeting to be held on 17th October 2019 attached to the Agenda.

We do not have any updates to report on Agenda items from the 6th June 2019 meeting.

Noted – That the following meetings will be on Thursday 6th February 2020 at 2pm and Thursday 4th June 2020 at 2pm

For Strategy Board papers and list of the members go to.

<http://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=727> then for the SGOSB Agenda and Minutes go to Browse Meetings, and click on Agenda.

Previous LAF Meeting papers are available with ctrl+click on: - [Local Access Forum](#).

Noted – That there are still no Walking Forum or other Forum Meetings.

7. Any Other Business

Noted - The BHS National Access Conference to be held at Stoneleigh on Sat 16th Nov. 2019.

Nino said that she puts in reports to the BHS on Access, and asks for reports from other BW Officers but gets nothing. Members are not aware of this. Zia said she is the Access & Bridleway Officer for the Shrewsbury & District Riding Club, affiliated to the BHS and appointed by them as a Liaison Officer, and sends information to, and responds for Angela the BHS County ABO.

8. Dates of the Next Meetings

The date of the next meeting, to be held at the Shirehall at **5.00pm for a prompt start at 5.30-7.30pm**, is agreed for **Monday 3rd February 2020**.

The 8th June 2020 is confirmed for the date of the following meeting.