

WILTSHIRE BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION (WBA)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 12th February 2025 at the Quaker Meeting Rooms, Sussex Wharf, Devizes.

Present:

Mr. Norman Beardsley - Chairman; Sustrans Liaison; CAF Representative; Netheravon Area Representative; (NB)
Mrs. Rosie Cunningham - Administration Secretary (RC)
Mrs. Kate Dilnott-Cooper - Minutes Secretary (KDC)
Mrs. Heather Emery - Marlborough Area Representative (HE)
Mrs. Emma Hodgson - Lavington Area Representative (EH)
Mrs. Liz Keen - Treasurer (LK)
Mrs. Rosie Pack - Membership Secretary; Newsletter Editor; Ride Organiser; (RP)

Apologies:

Mrs. Charlotte Hill-Baldwin - Web Master (CHB)
Mr. Bill Riley - Historical and Legal Advisor (BillR)

1.01 Minutes of the last Meeting - NB signed a copy of the minutes of the meeting held on 11th December 2024 as a true recording of proceedings and he took the document for filing at Brail Farm. The meeting planned to be held on Wednesday 8th January had been cancelled due to adverse weather conditions.

2.00 Matters Arising

2.01 (2.01) Treasurer's Financial Report

LK presented a bank reconciliation document which showed that the opening balance of the Current Account at the beginning of January was £6,253.66. During January £621.50 had been received, £564.00 of which was from subscriptions. There had been expenses of £144.70 to cover the cost of both the newsletter and room hire for the December meeting and the closing balance on 31st January was £6,730.46.

There had been no transactions for the Business Savings Account during the month and the balance in that account on 31st January was £18,020.47.

2.02 (2.02) Membership

RP reported that there were 139 members of which 111 were paid up.

2.03 (2.03) Newsletter

RP reported that the next newsletter was due to go out at the end of March.

2.04 (2.04) Electronic Communications

NB said that the current map on the Reporting In page of the WBA website was now obsolete and that CHB should be asked to update it. It was also suggested that there should also be a link to the Swindon map. NB went on to say that a rider from Idmiston had commented that there was no facility on the WBA Report Form to include photographs of defects. Following discussion, it was agreed that this would be a helpful addition to the form.

2.05 (2.05) Pleasure/Guided Rides

RP said that there were no plans for such a ride at the current moment.

2.06 (2.06) Brail Farm

1. Filing etc. - NB said that this was ongoing and up to date. NB went on to say that although he would be standing down as Chairman at the forthcoming AGM, he could take on the role of Filing Clerk from that date - this suggestion was received with gratitude from the other members of the Committee.
2. External Maintenance - NB said that that this was ongoing.

2.07 (2.07) Annual General Meeting (AGM)

This was to take place at Rushall Village Hall on Thursday 27th March with members attending from 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start. The Committee would set up from 6.30pm. NB said that he understood that his request to Andy Lemon of Wiltshire Police to be the Guest Speaker at the AGM had been passed to Emily Thomas, a member of his team but he had not yet received a response from her. He went on to say that he had sent a further request letter on 10th February. The Committee discussed and agreed all the tasks that needed to be undertaken for the AGM as follows:

NB to produce the Agenda and to bring the Display Boards and Old Maps.

LK to produce the Financial Report.

KDC to bring the Minutes of the 2024 AGM, the WBA clothing for sale and a £30.00 float. She would also produce the sign-in sheet.

RC to bring the raffle tickets to be sold. The Committee members were all asked to bring a raffle prize.

HE to bring tea, coffee, milk, biscuits etc for refreshment.

In addition the AGM was to be advertised on the WBA website and a poster was to be produced.

2.08 (2.08) Other Organisations

1. Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum (WSCAF) - NB said that the proposed dates for future meetings were 11th April, 23rd July and 5th November. The April meeting would be held in Civic Meeting Room 6

of Swindon Borough Council, Euclid Street, Swindon SN1 2JH. The venues for the two meetings later in the year were currently unknown.

2. Open Spaces Society (OSS) - NB said that, other than a Christmas card, there had been no monthly update for December 2024 and that the January 2025 update had been received at the end of the month and circulated to the Committee.

2.09 (2.09) Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs)

1. West Lavington BR14 - NB said that there was no historical evidence of Higher Rights recorded in *Not the Definitive Statement* as researched by BillR. (EH)
2. Easterton BR10 - upgrade to restricted byway. The application had been submitted by the British Horse Society (BHS) at Stoneleigh and received by Wiltshire Council (WC) on 18th October, 2021 (DMMO D/2021/060). As it would be a long time before it were dealt with by WC, it was agreed that this should be moved to the ANNEX LIST. (EH)
3. Kington Langley BR10 + BR11 (upgrade to BYs) - still pending, ongoing. (NB)
4. Access for riders at Conock - no progress, ongoing. It was agreed that this should be moved to the ANNEX LIST. (NB)
5. Winterslow BY94 - no change, ongoing. (NB)
6. Seend BR40 - two separate applications, reduction in width and upgrade to restricted byway. The reduction in width application was awaiting action by WC and ongoing.
The application for an upgrade to restricted byway had been submitted by the BHS at Stoneleigh and received by WC on 10th October 2021 (DMMO D/2021/039). As it would be a long time before it were dealt with by WC, it was agreed that this should be moved to the ANNEX LIST.
7. Application to record bridleway rights over part of Drove Lane, Market Lavington. The application had been submitted by a WBA member, Alan Woodford, on behalf of the BHS at Stoneleigh and received by WC on 21st July 2020 (DMMO D/2020/010). The order was made by WC on 5th December 2024 claiming restricted byway rights and confirmed with effect from 28th January 2025. Any objections were to be submitted within forty-two days commencing 6th February 2025. Ongoing. (EH)

2.10 (2.10) Contact with Chris Clark (CC) of WC

NB reported that a very successful meeting had been held on 29th January with Countryside Access Officers, Matthew Hale (MH) and Paul Millard (PM). NB had produced a list of items to be discussed, the responses to which are shown in the relevant entries below. The CAOs had also reported on work which had taken place on other PRowWs which had not been on WBA's radar. The next meeting would take place on 14th May at County Hall, Trowbridge.

Gates - North

- 2.11 (2.11) Broad Town BR25 - no change, ongoing. (RP)
- 2.12 (2.12) All Cannings BR20 + Stanton St Bernard BR10 - NB said that Stephen Leonard (SL) had said at the meeting on 29th January that he had had a further meeting with the landowner who remained reluctant to remove the gate. SL was to pursue further. Ongoing.
- 2.13 (2.13) Huish BR14 - no change, ongoing. (NB)

Gates - South

- 2.14 (2.14) Collingbourne Kingston BR1B - nothing happening, to be raised with CC. (RP)
- 2.15 (2.15) Berwick St John BR14 - no change, ongoing. (NB)

Gates - Central

- 2.16 (2.16) Longbridge Deverill BR2 - NB said that at the meeting on 29th January Ben Braine (BB) and Vicky Roscoe (VR) said they had been in contact with the land agent to arrange a meeting with the landowner and were awaiting a response. He went on to say that the weights had been taken off the gates so they did not slam shut but one of them was a pedestrian gate.
- 2.17 (2.17) Melksham Without BR87 - EH said that she needed to check whether or not the barbed wire had been removed.
- 2.18 (2.18) Longbridge Deverill BR9 - NB said that he had been told at the meeting on 29th January that WC was awaiting an inspection and action by BB and VR. Ongoing.
- 2.19 (2.19) Steeple Ashton RBY30 - NB said that he had been told at the meeting on 29th January that there had been no further progress by WC. Ongoing.

Gates - Swindon Borough Council (SBC)

- 2.20 (2.20) The Lane which runs from Hinton Parva in the parish of Bishopstone to Horpit in the parish of Wanborough. RP said that she understood that this had been done and she undertook to go and check it.

Signage - North

- 2.21 (2.21) Milton Lilbourne BR18A - no change, ongoing. (RP)

- 2.22 (2.22) Barbury Shooting School - ongoing. (NB)
- 2.23 (2.23) Baydon BR4 - status on MyWilts was In Progress, no updates (report number 40593), ongoing. (HE)
- 2.24 (2.24) Baydon BR5 + BY17 - HE reported that the status on MyWilts was In Progress, no updates (report number 54749), ongoing.
- 2.25 (2.25) Tidcombe and Fosbury BR1 + BR2 - no change, ongoing. (RP)
- 2.26 (2.26) Christian Malford BR9 - awaiting action by WC, ongoing. (NB)
- 2.27 (2.27) Signage required around the area of Westcourt, Burbage, Easton Royal, Milton Lilbourne, Wootton Rivers and Ram Alley - awaiting action by WC, ongoing. (NB)
- 2.28 (2.28) Grafton RBY15 - no change, it was suggested that this should be discussed with CC, ongoing. (RP)
- 2.29 (2.29) Grafton RBY29 + RBY30 - no change, RP suggested that this should be discussed with CC, ongoing.
- 2.30 (2.30) Fyfield BR25 - no change, ongoing. (RP)

Signage - South

- 2.31 (2.31) Winterbourne Stoke BR5 + Shrewton BY4 + BY5 - no change, ongoing. (NB)
- 2.32 (2.32) Chute BR4, BR36 + BR38 - no change, ongoing. (RP)

Signage - Central

- 2.33 (2.33) Bromham BR59 - RP said that Ali Rasey (AR) was on the case.
- 2.34 (2.34) Market Lavington BR24 - NB said that the signage had been installed at the end of 2024. TO BE CLOSED

Surface and Spoil on the Bridleway - North

- 2.35 (2.35 and 5.03) Pewsey BR6 - NB said that at the meeting on 29th January SL had reported the work could not be started until there were better weather conditions. NB went on to say that he had not had a response from Pewsey PC concerning his report. Details had been posted on the WBA Facebook page. Ongoing.
- 2.36 (2.36) North Newnton BR8 - NB reported that at the meeting on 29th January SL had said that the contractor had attended to remove the tyres but had been prevented from doing so by the landowner who had claimed ownership and said that they were being used to cover his silage. Although the tyres were on the bridleway they were not obstructing it. TO BE CLOSED.

Surface and Spoil on the Bridleway - South

- 2.37 (2.37) Sedgehill and Semley BR28 - NB reported that at the meeting on 29th January Carys Ford (CF) had said that despite there having been the intention to clear this during October 2024, this work had been prevented by the weather conditions. Ongoing.

Surface and Spoil on the Bridleway - Central

- 2.38 (2.38) Seend BR55 + Rowde BR21 - EH said that she had not yet had a chance to look at this, ongoing.

Overgrown Vegetation and Fallen Trees - North

- 2.39 (2.39) Pewsey BR69 - TO BE CLOSED (RP)

Overgrown Vegetation and Fallen Trees - Central

- 2.40 (2.42) Rowde BR19 - cul de sac blocked by a fallen tree. NB said that he had received a note from WBA member Jeremy Richardson confirming that the bridleway was totally blocked but that he had found a route through via an adjacent field and onto Rowde FP40 and FP41. Action awaited from WC, ongoing.
- 2.41 (2.43) Chapmanslade BY31 - ongoing. (NB)
- 2.42 (2.44) Melksham Without BR41 - overgrown vegetation. NB said that at the meeting on 29th January VR had reported that she would speak to the contractor as it was on his "to do" list. BB and VR will follow up, ongoing.
- 2.43 (2.45) West Ashton BR4 - bridleway and gate are reported as overgrown, NB said he was waiting for a further update from WC, ongoing.
- 2.44 (2.46) Cheverell Magna BR12, Witchcombe Lane - NB said that at the meeting on 29th January AR confirmed that the clearance of this route had been completed and further confirmation has been received from EH who has ridden this bridleway. TO BE CLOSED
- 2.45 (2.47) Zeals BR22 - dangerous access onto Bonham Lane caused by the high overgrown hedge. NB said that he was awaiting action and a response from WC. The minutes of the Zeals PC meeting held on 28th November 2024 stated that the report had been received but there were no action details recorded other than "noted", a formal response to the report is still awaited. At the meeting on 29th January CF and Alex Howson (AH) said that they will conduct further inspections and identify the responsible owner. Ongoing.
- 2.46 (4.02) Chute BR4 - a number of trees had fallen making the bridleway impassable, RP said that she had no further information about this.

2.47 (4.03) Wootton Bassett BR26A - three small trees had been causing an obstruction but they had been cleared. TO BE CLOSED

Solar Farms

2.48 (2.48) Proposed solar farm in the Malmesbury area (Lime Down) - KDC said that there was to be a meeting of the Stop Lime Down Solar Park group on 22nd February which she would attend. (NB)

2.49 (2.49) Proposed 160 acre solar farm which may affect Marden BR6, Wilsford BR6 + BR10 + BY7 - RC said that there had been a Wilsford and Charlton St Peter PC meeting the previous week at which there were rumours that this project had been ditched.

2.50 (2.50) Proposed solar farm at Potterne Park Farm - KDC reported that according to WC's website there would be a decision on this on 28th February.

2.51 (2.51) Solar farm being built at Folly Lane, Lacock - KDC said that she had looked into this and although there were bridleways close to the project, there were none that were directly affected by it. The PRoWs that were directly affected by the project were all footpaths.

Other

2.52 (2.52) Ogbourne St George BR7 - ongoing. (NB)

2.53 (2.53) Shalbourne BR50 - NB said that he had been told at the meeting on 29th January that WC had made no further progress, ongoing. (RP)

2.54 (2.54) Hullavington BY9 + BY32 - as a result of a change of CAO boundaries, BB and VR had recently taken over responsibility for this route and they have now acquainted themselves with the situation. They suggest that this route can be opened but that the gates at either end need to be removed. They were working to arrange a meeting with the landowner and a representative of the PC and Paul Millard (PM) would also attend. Ongoing.

2.55 (2.55) Durnford BR11 + Winterbourne BR27 - no information, ongoing. (RP)

2.56 (2.56) Chute BY35 - NB said that at the meeting on 29th January he was informed that CF and AH had met with the landowner who had allegedly consulted a solicitor to investigate the boundaries and the width of the byway. CC and CF had been due to meet with the landowner on 3rd February. (RP and NB)

2.57 (2.57) Horse warning signs in the West Grafton/Burbage area - RP said that she had not received a reply from Stuart Wheeler, she had tried to email Burbage PC and would ring Stuart Wheeler.

2.58 (2.58) Ramsbury FP5 + FP8C + BR6 + Little Bedwyn FP20 - no change, ongoing. (RC)

2.59 (2.59) Application to delete Ogbourne St George BY1, also known as Gypsy Lane, and add BOAT in the parish of Chiseldon - no update from either WC or SBC, ongoing. (NB)

2.60 (2.60) Search for new Chairman of WBA - ongoing. (All)

2.61 (2.61) Search for new Filing Clerk for WBA - NB said that he could take on this role following the AGM when he was no longer the Chairman of WBA.

2.62 (2.62) Twenty-eight ProW defect reports submitted by Clare Brixey - NB said that he had worked his way through these and had just a couple more to look at. Ongoing.

2.63 (2.63) Collingbourne Ducis BR35 - RP said that she had heard nothing about this.

2.64 (2.64) Proposed new sites for gypsy and travelling community - ongoing. (NB)

2.65 (2.65) Preshute BR31 - blocked by the extension of a garden of a local residence, TO BE CLOSED (RP)

2.66 (2.66) Following the discussion at the last meeting about a gift for BM, KDC said that she had received a quote of £135.50 for mounting and framing the page and adding a plaque to the frame. It was agreed that this should be accepted and KDC undertook to arrange it.

2.67 (4.01) Stanton St Bernard BR17 and Alton BR2 - temporary cattle handling pens causing obstruction. TO BE CLOSED

3.00 Correspondence

3.01 13th December - J Green at WC, proposal to upgrade Trowbridge FP8 to BR, objections to the modifications received. Hearing with the Inspector to be held on 4th February at County Hall (distributed on 4th January).

3.02 31st December - Craig Harlow (CH) at WC, proposed diversion of Longbridge Deverill FP5 (distributed on 4th January)

3.03 31st December - CH at WC, diversion of Castle Combe FP7 and Yatton Keynell FP25 to be considered by the Northern Area Planning Committee on 22nd January (distributed on 4th January)

3.04 3rd January - email from NB of WC newsletter which included a short resumé on MyWilts.

3.05 3rd January - email from NB concerning insurance key facts affecting Equine Affiliated Groups as submitted by the British Horse Society (BHS) which are effective until 28th February 2025.

3.06 7th January - CH at WC, two applications to record restricted byways in Collingbourne Kingston (distributed on 7th January)

3.07 10th January - Sally Madgwick (SM) at WC, proposal to upgrade Ramsbury BR9A and part of Ramsbury FP9B to a restricted byway. Order made, copy of order, order plan and Notice.

3.08 15th January - CH at WC, diversion of Castle Combe FP7 and Yatton Keynell FP25 now to be considered on 19th February (distributed on 16th January)

3.09 15th January - A Roberts at WC, proposed diversion of Pitton and Farley FP33 and upgrade to a bridleway.

3.10 15th January - Jane Hughes (JH) at WC, DM and Statements Edington FP37 and FP38

3.11 16th January - CH at WC, upgrade of Grafton FP13 and Tidcombe and Fosbury FP11 to a restricted byway. Order confirmed, copy of order, order plan and Notice.

3.12 24th January - email from NB, update from KDC on One Tree Hill Solar Farm and a quote for the framing of the hunting scene for BM's gift (£135.50)

3.13 24th January - email from NB concerning WC latest travel and transport news featuring Winterslow Byway

3.14 24th January - email from NB re proposed diversion of Pitton and Farley FP33 and upgrade to a bridleway - NB's written response on behalf of WBA

3.15 24th January - email from NB, correspondence from KDC re Lime Down Solar Farm

3.16 24th January - email from NB, further publication of Wiltshire News with an article on fly tipping

3.17 25th January - email from NB, suggested items for discussion at meeting with WC on 29th January

3.18 30th January - CH at WC, upgrade Drove Lane to Market Lavington RBY56, order confirmed, copy of order, order plan and Notice

3.19 5th February - email from NB, historical evidence guidance notes produced by Alan Kind for the BHS

3.20 5th February - email from NB, BHS Access and Rights of Way 2024 Annual Review, no mention of Wiltshire ...

3.21 5th February - JH at WC, DM and Statements Grafton 13 and Tidcombe and Fosbury 11

3.22 9th February - email from NB, January 2025 edition of the OSS newsletter

3.23 10th February - CH of WC, proposed diversions of Brixton Deverill BR1, BR2 and BR16, Woodcombe Farm, to be considered by WC Western Area Planning Committee on 5th March

3.24 11th February - JH at WC, DM and Statements Market Lavington 56

3.25 11th February - email from NB, urgent closure notice Edington BY26 for urgent tree works

3.26 12th February - A Roberts at WC, proposed diversion of Chippenham FP1

4.00 Any Other Business

4.01 Notification from Jeremy Richardson about poor signage along Melksham Without BR25 and BR25A, RP undertook to have a look at it.

4.02 Notification from Jeremy Richardson about a dangerous exit from Melksham Without BR40 onto A3102 at Manor Farm, RP undertook to have a look at it.

4.03 Notification from Sara Murphy about numerous blocked/gated and locked/fenced bridleways in Purton/Greenhill area, WC report number 00172111. NB said that he would go and have a look at it.

4.04 Notification from John Sawyer about various gate problems at the southern end of Bremhill BR1, WC report number 00211140. KDC said she would have a look at it.

4.05 Notification from Hayley Hannah about an electric fence across Idmiston BR12, WC report number 00211174. NB said that he would have look at it.

4.06 Additional information from the WC/WBA meeting on 29th January. NB had questioned why MyWilts reports had been shown in the update/remarks section as *closed* by the CAOs despite remedial action not being completed. SL had retorted that there seemed no reason to keep numerous reports on one problem open, when action was in hand. NB had suggested that this would indicate that reporting persons would no longer receive progress reports to which SL agreed. NB had also explained that this type of tactic was often termed as The Numbers Game, ie to close something gave management a false impression that work was being cleared well. Many live entries could suggest that the workforce was not coping too well, again SL agreed.

4.07 Lengths of ProWs currently unusable due to blockages, NB had used the examples of Ogbourne St George BY1 and BR7 - BY1 is currently under investigation by both SBC and WC whilst the existence of BR7 is disputed by the landowner. Other examples were Cricklade BR18 which runs through the middle of a traveller site and Durrington BR1 which is totally overgrown and passes through a river ford. All of these had been formerly reported to WC in previous years but "shelved". However, due to the submission of a DMMO application by the landowner, Ogbourne St George BY1 is now active. SL had again retorted that there were numerous other unusable ProWs of which WC was aware.

4.08 Reports by CAOs of work currently in progress but not known to WBA

1. Central Area - BB and VR
Corsley BR8 and BR10 - working with Longleat to improve access

Longbridge Deverill BR8 - Definitive Statement records width of 0.6 of a metre. Permission given by the landowner and now has a width of 2 - 3 metres.

Longbridge Deverill RB7 - WC has received a quote for the removal of a gate

2. North Area - SL and AR
Winter clearance of:
Upavon BR3, Tidcombe and Fosbury BY9, Shalbourne BY37, Marston Meysey BR18, Milton Lilbourne BR18 and All Cannings BR30 and BR31
3. Planings at Milton Hill near Pewsey - NB was unsure of the identification of the ProW but it was possibly Milton Lilbourne BR17 and BR20A.
Milton Lilbourne BR22 and byway - materials onsite ready to be laid.
Chirton bridleway has had stone laid - NB was unsure of the identification of the ProW.
4. South Area - AH and CF
Flail cutting of Shaftesbury Drive - NB was unsure of the identification of the ProW.

4.09 NB drew the Committee's attention to a presentation entitled Horse and Rider Road Safety between the BHS and Wiltshire Police which was to be held at 7.00pm on 14th March at the Police Station in Devizes.

5.00 Date of Next Meeting

5.01 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 12th March 2025 at 7.30pm in the Marsden Room at the Quaker Meeting Rooms, Sussex Wharf, Devizes.

The meeting closed at 2135 hours.