

WILTSHIRE BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION (WBA)

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 14th August 2024 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)
Miss Barbara MacMullen - Filing Clerk (BM)
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 10th July 2024 as a true recording of proceedings and this was passed to BM for filing at Brail Farm.

2.00 Matters Arising

2.01 (2.01) Treasurer's Financial Report

LK said that she had now got the internet banking up and running and that the Quaker Meeting Room payments had all now been made. She presented a bank reconciliation document which showed that the opening balance of the Current Account at the beginning of July was £6,985.81 since when there had been no income but there had been expenditure of £229.00. The closing balance of the Current Account at the 31st July was therefore £6,756.81.

The Business Savings Account had not had any income or expenditure during the month and the balance in that account at the 31st July was £17,886.44.

2.02 (2.02) Membership

RP reported that there were 139 members who had paid a subscription. She said that she was still waiting to see if Mrs. Franks rejoined.

2.03 (2.03) Newsletter

RP said that the next newsletter was almost ready to be circulated.

2.04 (2.04) Electronic Communications

NB said that these were being kept up to date by CHB as usual.

2.05 (2.05) Pleasure/Guided Rides

RP said that she had hoped that it might be possible to have an Everleigh ride in September but that this would be too tricky. RP agreed to send a proposal to NB and he would see what could be done. NB said that the British Horse Society (BHS) had put together a guide for access to military land. RP went on to say that she was working on another possible ride for the spring.

2.06 (2.06) Brail Farm

1. Filing etc. - BM said that she was continuing to do some filing. BM went on to say that she had drawn up a job specification and that it would be included in the upcoming newsletter.
2. External Maintenance - RP said that she had done some weed killing there.

2.07 (2.07) Annual General Meeting - it was agreed that the next Annual General Meeting should be held at Rushall Village Hall on 27th March 2025.

2.08 (2.08) Other Organisations

1. Wiltshire and Swindon Countryside Access Forum (WSCAF) - NB reported that he had attended the recent meeting. He said that there was to be no more development on MyWilts but that there would be a new system going live at the end of September.
2. Open Spaces Society (OSS) - NB said that the OSS July newsletter had asked what should be done about overgrown paths, see under Correspondence.

2.09 (2.09) Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMOs)

NB said that he understood that there were currently 374 outstanding DMMOs and Wiltshire Council (WC) could only deal with six a year. He understood from WSCAF that there were no new public enquiries planned.

1. West Lavington BR14 - EH said that she had done nothing, ongoing.

2. Easterton BR10 - EH said that she had done nothing, ongoing.
3. Kington Langley BR10 + BR11 (upgrade to BYs) - NB said that he had done nothing, ongoing.
4. Stert FP11 (upgrade to BR) - RC said that the application had been made, see under Correspondence.
5. Access for riders at Conock - NB said that he had got nowhere on this, ongoing.
6. Winterslow BY94 - NB said that this was being dealt with by WC and that he is waiting for the decision from the Planning Inspectorate.

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

NB said that the next meeting was scheduled for 4th September.

Gates

2.11 (2.11) Broad Chalke BR13 - NB said that he had looked at this the previous week. The problem gate was still there but it was tied back and had been for some time. The broken gate had been removed and the signage had been sorted out. TO BE CLOSED

2.12 (2.12) Broad Town BR25 - RP undertook to have a look at this in the near future. Ongoing.

2.13 (2.13) All Cannings BR20 + Stanton St Bernard BR10 - NB said that nothing had happened on this. Ongoing.

2.14 (2.15) Longbridge Deverill BR2 - NB said that this was on the list for the meeting with CC. Ongoing.

2.15 (2.16) Collingbourne Kingston BR1B - RP had suggested that an application should be made for a grant from the Pewsey Area Board to sort out these dodgy gates, it was agreed that this should be done and RP undertook to do so. Ongoing.

2.16 (2.17) Melksham BR87 - EH said that she had not looked at this. She said that there had been barbed wire on the other side of the gate and she understood that WC had sorted it out and she undertook to go and check.

2.17 (2.18) Longbridge Deverill BR9 - NB said that there was nothing happening and that this was on the list for the meeting with CC. Ongoing.

2.18 (2.19) Berwick St John BR14 - NB said that he was still waiting to visit this one, ongoing.

2.19 (2.20) Huish BR14 - NB undertook to go and look at this, ongoing.

2.20 (4.05) The Lane which runs from Hinton Parva to Horpit in the Swindon/Wanborough area - RP said that she had taken photographs and had sent them to Martin Fry at Swindon Borough Council.

Signage

2.21 (2.21) Winterbourne Stoke BR5 + Shrewton BY4 + BY5 - nothing has happened, it is on the list for the meeting with CC, ongoing. (NB)

2.22 (2.22) Milton Lilborne BR18A - RP said that she had rereported this one and that it should be on the list for the meeting with CC. RP undertook to send NB a list of items to be discussed with CC.

2.23 (2.23) Barbary Shooting School - waiting for a visit by NB, ongoing.

2.24 (2.24) Bromham BR59 - no progress so on the list for CC. (RP)

2.25 (2.25) Baydon BR4 - HE reported that the status on MyWilts was In Progress, no updates, no notes (report number 40593). She further reported that she had emailed Stephen Leonard (SL) about this and had copied in Alison Rasey (AR). Ongoing.

2.26 (2.26) Baydon BR5 + BY17 - HE reported that the status on MyWilts was In Progress, no updates since 10.02.2022 (report number 40593). She further reported that she had emailed SL about this and had copied in AR. Ongoing.

2.27 (2.27) Market Lavington BR24 - EH said that there was still no sign on the lamppost which did have signs on it.

2.28 (2.28) Chute BR4, BR36 + BR38 - RP said that nothing had happened there and that she would put it on the list to be discussed with CC. Ongoing.

2.29 (2.29) Tidcombe and Fosbury BR1 + BR2 - RP said that nothing had happened there and that she would put it on the list to be discussed with CC. Ongoing.

2.30 (2.30) Christian Malford BR9 - no update, ongoing.

2.31 (2.31) Signage required around the area of Westcourt, Easton Royal, Wootton Rivers and Ram Alley - ongoing. (NB)

2.32 (2.32) Grafton RBY15 - nothing has happened, ongoing. (RP)

2.33 (2.33) Grafton RBY29 + RBY30 - RP said that not only had the signage disappeared but it had not been cleared and was almost unrideable.

2.34 (4.09) Wilcot BR39 and BR19 - signage on the main road between them. EH had not yet reported this. HE said that she had looked at it and that there was a sign which had been covered with ivy which had now been removed. TO BE CLOSED

Surface and Spoil on the Bridleway

2.35 (2.34) Baydon BY19 - badly rutted, HE reported that the status on MyWilts for this (report number 58323) was In Progress, no updates since 15.03.2022. She further reported that she had emailed SL and copied in AR. Ongoing.

2.36 (2.36) Poulshot BR8 - LK reported that she had looked at this earlier in the day and it had been mown. TO BE CLOSED

2.37 (2.37) Pewsey BR6 - on the list for the meeting with CC. Ongoing. (NB)

2.38 (2.38) North Newton BR8 - NB undertook to rereport this as flytipping. He went on to say that he visited the area at the end of July and it was a narrow track down the middle and down towards the road end by the farm there were a lot of tyres which were then overgrown. Ongoing.

2.39 (2.39) Seend BR55 + Rowde BR21 - EH said that she had not visited the site and so had nothing to report. Ongoing.

2.40 (2.40) Tilshead BY6 - EH undertook to ride it and report back. Ongoing.

2.41 (2.41) Sedgehill and Semley BR28 - NB said that nothing was happening and that it was on the list to be discussed with CC. Ongoing.

2.42 (2.44) Salisbury RBY3 - surface problems, waiting for a quote from the contractor, ongoing. (NB)

Overgrown Vegetation and Fallen Trees

2.43 (2.42) Rowde BR19 - blocked by a fallen tree, NB's will visit to assess the current situation, ongoing.

2.44 (2.43) Chapmanslade BY31 - overgrown, NB's visit still awaited, ongoing.

2.45 (2.45) Melksham Without BR41 - serious overgrowth, on the list for the meeting with CC. (NB)

2.46 (2.46) West Ashton BR4 - bridleway and gate are blocked by vegetation, waiting a visit from NB, ongoing.

2.47 (2.47) Cheverell Magna BR12, Witchcombe Lane - EH said that the farm end was fine but that it was up by the pavilion that it was very overgrown. EH had ridden it and LK had walked it - it was passable but was unlikely to be so for long.

2.48 (2.48) Tollard Royal BR6 + BR8 - NB said that this had been blocked by hedge, brambles and low branches but had now been cleared. TO BE CLOSED

2.49 (4.03) Calne Without BR37 - severely overgrown. LK said that she had been to look at this and that it had been cleared. TO BE CLOSED

2.50 (4.04) Seend BR41 and BR42 - overgrown and barely passable. NB said he would go and have a look at it.

2.51 (4.06) Burbage BR37 - RP said that she had clipped this and that it was being used every day. She went on to say that the log had been moved to one side and that it was possible to ride past it. TO BE CLOSED

2.52 (4.08) Pewsey BR69 - very overgrown with nettles, ongoing. (RP)

Planning Applications

2.53 (4.07) Easterton BY5 - PL/2024/04207, construction of six houses at the southern end of the byway. KDC said that according to the WC website, the latest decision date was to be 23rd August.

Solar Farms

2.54 (2.52) Proposed solar farm at Potterne Park Farm - KDC reported that following the last meeting she had posted the agreed objection from the WBA on the WC website. She went on to say that the consultation had now closed and that she was unsure as to what would happen next. TO BE MOVED TO THE ANNEX LIST

2.55 (2.53) Proposed solar farm on One Tree Hill - KDC reported that following the last meeting she had posted the agreed objection from the WBA on the WC website. She went on to say that the website had had 313 comments posted on the subject of One Tree Hill, 297 of which were objections to the proposal. She further said that the consultation had now closed. TO BE MOVED TO THE ANNEX LIST

2.56 (2.54) Proposed solar farm in the Malmesbury area - NB said that no planning application had been made for this project and that the decision would be taken by the Secretary of State.

2.57 (2.55) Proposed 160 acre solar farm which may affect Marden BR6, Wilsford BR6 + BR10 + BY7 - RC said that she had heard nothing and had seen nothing about it.

Other

2.58 (2.56) Ogbourne St George BR7 - NB said that this was on the list for the meeting with CC.

2.59 (2.57) Shalbourne BR50 - RP said that she had had a telephone conversation with Nicola Hartman, the member of the Shalbourne Parish Council who dealt with rights of way. RP went on to say that this was on the list to be discussed at the meeting with CC.

2.60 (2.58) Hullavington BY9 + BY32 - NB said that The Green Lanes Association (GLASS) was also worried about this and had been pushing to get it opened. He went on to say that it is on the list to be discussed at the meeting

with CC and it could be that it would be necessary to put in section 130A documentation under the Highways Act 1980. Ongoing.

2.61 (2.60) Steeple Ashton RBY30 - No update. EH reported that she had taken photographs of the two blocks of concrete and undertook to send them to NB. On the list to be discussed at the meeting with CC. Ongoing.

2.62 (2.61) Durnford BR11 + Winterbourne BR27 - RP reported that she had taken a couple of photographs of this one. She went on to say that it was on the list to be discussed at the meeting with CC. Ongoing.

2.63 (2.62) Chute BY35 - RP said that she had not heard anything and that it was on the list to be discussed at the meeting with CC. Ongoing.

2.64 (2.63) Horse warning signs in the West Grafton/Burbage area - nothing happening, ongoing. (RP)

2.65 (2.64) Easterton BR26 - it was reported that this had now been harvested. TO BE CLOSED

2.66 (2.65) Ramsbury FP5 + FP8C + BR6 + Little Bedwyn FP20 - no progress, ongoing. (NB)

2.67 (2.66) Application to delete Ogbourne St George BY1, also known as Gypsy Lane, and add BOAT in the parish of Chiseldon. No update, ongoing. (NB)

2.68 (2.67) Devizes incident report (00145938) of delivery vehicles illegally using the bridleway to access a local housing estate, no update. Still ongoing. (NB)

2.69 (2.68) Search for new Chairman of the WBA - NB said that this had been put on the WBA website and also posted on the WBA's Facebook page detailing what the role entailed. (All)

2.70 (2.69) Search for new Filing Clerk for the WBA - BM circulated a document she had produced detailing what the role entailed. (All)

2.71 (2.70) Twenty-eight PRow defect reports submitted by Clare Brixey - NB said that he was slowly working his way through the list but said that none of the issues were very serious. Ongoing.

2.72 (2.72) Savernake FP30 - RP undertook to walk the path the following week and would take photographs, ongoing.

2.73 (4.02) Following the report about which Katie Wright had informed NB, RP had ascertained that the path involved was Collingbourne Ducis BR35.

2.74 (4.07) BM reported that she had booked the Marsden Room of the Quaker Meeting Rooms for the 2025 monthly meetings of the WBA at 7.30pm on the following dates:

Wednesday 8th January
Wednesday 12th February
Wednesday 12th March
Wednesday 9th April
Wednesday 14th May
Wednesday 11th June
Wednesday 9th July
Wednesday 13th August
Wednesday 10th September
Wednesday 8th October
Wednesday 12th November
Wednesday 10th December

3.00 Correspondence

3.01 17th July - email from NB with job description for Chairman.

Comments:

KDC - time taken up per week/month

LK - min/max hours per week

RP - other meetings attended

3.02 20th July - from A Roberts at WC re upgrade of Stert 11 to a bridleway. Order made, copy of order, order plan and notice.

3.03 24th July - from Jane Hughes (JH) at WC - DM and Statements for Chippenham 18, 19 and 22.

3.04 25th July - from Craig Harlow (CH) at WC - proposed changes to RoW network at Woodcombe Farm, Brixton Deverill (distributed)

3.05 26th July - email from NB with Agenda for WSCAF meeting on 31st July

3.06 27th July - from J Green, application to add a footpath from Woodcock Gardens to Boreham Road, Warminster

3.07 30th July - email from NB circulating the July update from OSS - section regarding overgrown paths

3.08 30th July - email from NB re Shalbourne BR50, it appears that it is not just the WBA trying to resolve this. See 2.59 above.

3.09 30th July - email from NB re Gypsies and Travellers, Development Plan Document, Consultation

3.10 30th July - from JH at WC - DM and Statements for Minety FP14

3.11 1st August - email from NB re the difficult access to Swindon Borough Council (SBC) RoW maps, NB assisted in how to access

3.12 9th August - from CH at WC - application to upgrade Grafton FP13 and Tidcombe and Fosbury FP11 to restricted byways (distributed). It was agreed that this application should be supported and RC undertook to do so.

4.00 Any Other Business

4.01 NB said that he had received notification from Jo Lord that there were approximately 100 round bales stacked across, and blocking Wilsford BR10. This had been reported on MyWilts, number 00178773.

4.02 NB reported that he had received notification from Lucy Clark that there were signage problems and blocked access on Fyfield BR25. In addition, the landowner had disputed the existence of the bridleway. This had been reported on MyWilts, number 00156169. RP undertook to have a look.

4.03 NB went on to say that he had received notification from Sarah-Jane Bullock, writing on behalf of Easterton Parish Council, that Easterton BR12 was extremely overgrown and there were also fallen trees. KDC undertook to walk it.

4.04 NB drew attention to the notification from CH at WC concerning proposed changes to Brixton Deverill BR1, BR2 and BR16, Public Path Order P/2024/001. See 3.04.

4.05 NB said that he had received notification from CH at WC of the application to upgrade Grafton FP13 and Tidcombe and Fosbury FP11 to restricted byways. DMMO reference D/2011/4. See 3.12.

4.06 HE said that she had reported that Huish BR15 was overgrown with trees and bushes, reducing both the height and width of the bridleway (report number 00182237).

4.07 HE went on to say that she had also reported that Huish BR6 was overgrown with bracken and nettles nearly obscuring the path, also trees and bushes severely reducing the width and height of the bridleway (report number 00182243).

4.08 HE further said that she had reported West Overton BR20 as being overgrown with trees and bushes which reduced the height and width of the bridleway (report number 00182245).

4.09 EH mentioned the enormous white plastic covered piles which were across West Lavington BR32 although they did not block it as it was possible to get round the outside and then through the middle of them. She suggested that this should be on the list for the meeting with CC and undertook to provide NB with some photographs.

4.10 BM drew the Committee's attention to two newspaper cuttings from the Gazette and Herald, one headlined "Cuts impact on plan for station" and the other "Rights of way backlog 'not unusual'", both of which are attached as an Appendix to these minutes.

5.00 Date of Next Meeting

5.01 The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 11th September 2024 at 7.30pm in the Marsden Room at the Quaker Meeting Rooms, Sussex Wharf, Devizes.

The meeting closed at 2135 hours.

Cuts impact on plan for station

Jason Hughes

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COUNCILLORS are "disappointed" after government funding cuts delivered a blow to plans for two new Wiltshire railway stations.

On Monday, July 29, Chancellor Rachel Reeves confirmed the previous government's Restoring Your Railway programme would be scrapped to save £85 million.

The move comes amidst claims the Treasury must find £5.5 billion in savings this year.

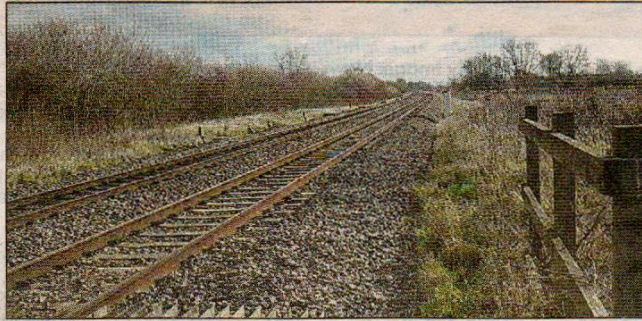
Multiple projects in Wiltshire benefitted from the fund, including an unmanned Gateway Railway Station in Devizes and a new Corsham Station.

Devizes remains one of the biggest towns in Wiltshire without a station while Corsham has been without rail services for decades.

The business cases for these projects were financed by the axed programme but schemes around the country have reportedly now been paused.

Cllr Tamara Reay, cabinet member for transport, said the news was a blow.

She said: "We are extremely disappointed that the government has decided to end the Restoring Your Railways programme, as we have benefitted from the fund to further business cases for Devizes Gateway station, a station in



The site of the proposed Devizes station.

Corsham and wider rail improvements across Wiltshire, including at Westbury station."

Despite the setback, the council is determined to progress the projects and remains hopeful they will be considered for Department for Transport funding individually.

Cllr Reay added: "It was anticipated that the infrastructure build for these improvements would be funded from other capital sources, and we are aware that although the overall Restoring your Railways programme has been cancelled, the Secretary of State has been invited to reconsider individual projects as part of Department for Transport's review of their wider transport infrastructure portfolio.

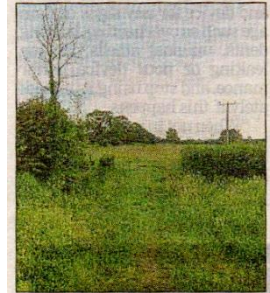
"We will ensure that the Secretary of State is aware of the high level of support and significant benefits of the above projects, and lobby for their retention.

"We are currently preparing our latest Local Transport Plan, which will set out a vision for the future of sustainable and affordable transport in Wiltshire until 2038.

"Rail improvements, along with a wider rail strategy, will form a key part of this, with priorities for investment, such as at Westbury and Devizes Gateway, to encourage economic growth and improve access to sustainable transport.

"We remain committed to all of these projects and will continue to work with both local and national partners to take them forward."

Rights of way backlog 'not unusual'



Wiltshire has a backlog of 360 rights of way applications

WILTSHIRE Council has said that its backlog of more than 360 applications to modify public right of way maps is not "unusual" among rural authorities.

The council was criticised recently after a man said he was unsure he would see his applications resolved before he dies.

Correspondence between the Planning Inspectorate and the applicant, Chas Townley, revealed that some applications submitted to Wiltshire Council had been pending for over 20 years.

The inspector concluded that it would be "unreasonable for the applicant to wait at least another ten years" and directed the council to make a decision before the end of the year.

Wiltshire Council has now provided a statement on the backlog of pending applications.

Cllr Nick Holder, cabinet member for highways said, "We do have a backlog in processing rights of way applications, but this is not unusual among rural authorities, and many around the country have similar backlogs.

"Changing or modifying a single right of way is an extremely comprehensive and thorough process that takes many months of historical investigation and work to produce reports that can be 80 pages long.

"We will continue to do all we can to process applications to change rights of way as soon as we can."