

## CycleWight AGM 25th November 2022

The 2022 Annual General Meeting was at Carisbrooke Village Hall. Speakers were Stewart Chandler, Martin Gibson, & Matt Whittaker. Approximately 30 attended including online.

### **1. Review of Year, Tim Thorne Chair**

Tim started by referring to Gunville Greenway Project which took place earlier in the year. This was to encourage people to cycle to Newport from Gunville and Carisbrooke. It helped the group gain an insight on what were the issues linked to urban cycling. An application for housing development off Gunville Road will give rise to more vehicular traffic with pressure to open up Taylor Road as a through route. However we will push to continue development of the area for walking and cycling.

CycleWight has commented this year on twelve planning applications, 3 more than last year. There is still room for improvement in new applications for facilities for walking and cycling, such as dropped kerbs and raised crossings.

Cycle track cutting back is carried out by Island Roads and needs to be at more appropriate times, This is contracted by IWC Transport & Highways department, who now have a Transport Planning officer and a Road Safety officer. The Wider of the Rider campaign was instigated by CycleWight in 2016 and has been re-activated by the Road Safety Team.

Signing the Undercliff alternative round-the-island route for cyclists has been on our agenda for four years and has finally been delivered by Island Roads. Three thousand saw the tweet drawing attention to this. On the other hand the St Mary's Junction changes are not satisfactorily signed for cyclists. CycleWight have offered to help with the signs for cyclists at Ryde seafront. "Think Bike" signs for traffic arriving on the Island have been a project pursued by Pete Dyer on Cyclewight's behalf. He has persuaded Red Funnel to give support and is working on overcoming the obstacles in gaining permission to have them erected.

Welcome developments during the year also include that LCWIP plans are now referenced in planning applications. A grant application by CW to Southwestern Railways seeks to survey a possible off-road cycling link from Brading Station to the round-the-island route at Yarbridge. Cowes based, Together Mission Zero, has formed a group including an "Active Travel Hub" which CycleWight are members. LCN 120 (guidance on cycle infrastructure) advocates removal of cycle track barriers which restrict access to wheelchair and mobility machines. CW are compiling a list to send to IWC. We issued a press release on the new Highway Code which makes the law much clearer in respect of vulnerable road users. The Coppins Bridge traffic lights have been reprogrammed to expedite crossing by walkers & cyclists.

CycleWight will be 30 years old next year, and the Newport - Sandown track will have been open for 20 years. Tim asked us to consider how to celebrate, and suggested the Saturday before the Randonnée as a day to aim for.

Questions from audience followed:

# When will the Newport-Yarmouth route be provided, given that the Newport - Sandown cycle track is 20 years old? Tim is waiting to hear from Graham Biss who is leading this project. The IW Council has bid for funding via Levelling-Up money. The next speaker will take up this issue.

# The Newport-Ryde cycle route suffers from barriers and narrow track in the Ladies Walk area near Ryde. Can this be improved? Tim said the barriers as they are now are more or less compliant with LTN120. Ryde Golf Club were involved in the original agreement for the route as it is their land which is crossed and this was part of permission to allow access.

## **2. Stewart Chandler, Transport & Highways Client Manager IW Council**

Stewart said his background is in accounting and administration mostly to do with transport.

In his role as Transport & Highways Client Manager for the council he was responsible for recruiting Lewis Campbell as Road Safety manager, who has re-launched the “Wider for the Rider” campaign.

The Transport Strategy aspect of council policy is laid down in the Local Transport Plan. Daniel Washington is planning officer whose role is to produce the plan which will set out how transport will be de-carbonised. Guidance laid down by DfT determines much of the strategy, and this guidance is still delayed. Nevertheless the department hopes to adopt the strategy next year along with the Island Planning Strategy.

He links up on behalf of IWC with county neighbours such as Hampshire to co-ordinate our policies. The business case looks at Ryde and Portsmouth connections. LTN1/20 compatibility is important.

The department have rolled out bike share schemes in association with Beryl Bikes. These now cover the Sandown Bay area and interconnect via cycle tracks. The Newport to Mews Lane scheme was delivered. Future improvements are planned subject to funding. It is hoped to move away from shared space on pavements to dedicated walking & cycling routes.

He corresponds with the Chair of CW regarding cycle track maintenance concerns. Island Roads are contracted for three verge cuts per year and to cut 1 metre back from the edge of the cycle track. Cutting has to be carried out by machine to keep the cost within reason, although there is some criticism of damage left to growth alongside the track. There are 3 inspectors employed to carry out 6 monthly checks and flag up problems. However please report problems to Island Roads directly, online or by phone. There is a schedule for work to be carried out, which takes account of issues such as badger activities at Budbridge.

Stewart explained that the Island Roads contract is for maintenance, and unsealed surfaces will remain that way unless further work is funded. However they hope to improve and seal the sections from Shide to Blackwater, and from Blackwater Hollow as far as Naturezones. This planned work means that the cycle track will be closed while the work is completed, which could be before Easter. He said that inspectors are currently looking at drainage issues and added that past agreements with landowners will be honoured. Matt Whittaker asked if diversions will be signposted? Stewart confirmed this would be the case.

The Ryde - Yarmouth Green route is included in funding from the levelling up bid. The project is led by Graham Biss. There are 11 landowners whose agreement is key. Stewart confirmed the current position is that a couple of landowners have issues which are subject to further negotiation. It is hoped that this can be resolved as there is a lot of support including from our local MP.

## **3. Martin Gibson, People-Powered Director**

Along with Matt Whittaker and Will Ainslie, Martin is a director of People Powered. They have produced LCWIPs for a number of areas across the island including Cowes, Northwood & Gurnard. Currently they are working on the Brading Bembridge and St Helens plan. There is a LCWIP for E Cowes and Whippingham which was done by another company.

Martin outlined the steps to prepare Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plans for an area. Focus is on quiet neighbourhoods with streets safe for cycling and a network of interconnections with other areas. LCN 1/20 provides ground breaking guidance and is similar to the Dutch approach to traffic & neighbourhood management. It is necessary for councils to be bold in putting forward walking & cycling plans, and to expect noisy objections. However surveys show wide support for traffic calming measures from the general public.

He noted that in Scotland the expenditure per head on sustainable transport is around £40/person/year, while in England it is around £7/person/year/ and on the Isle of Wight it is around £2/person/year.

#### **4. Matt Whittaker KEERT**

Matt estimates a cargo bike can carry up to four times its own weight, while not consuming fossil fuel. The electrical power is great for travel on the level and for hill climbing, although the rider has to be very careful to control speed on descents.



Following the pilot trial of cargo-delivery services KEERT has been established as a commercial company with fair wages and contract terms offered to employees. This will be great employment for many while providing sustainable goods deliveries.

Initially the Cowes, Newport and Ryde areas are covered, while potential customers are enquiring from further afield and will be catered for when expansion can be managed.

The audience can help by spreading the word and asking people if they know about KEERT.

#### **5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

It was agreed by to re-elect the officers and committee as follows.

Tim Thorne – Chair, Jessica Garbett – Treasurer, Alex Lawson – Secretary.

Committee members Alan Bennett, Val Lawson, Mike Marlow, Malcolm Ross, Matthew Whittaker, Mick Watts, George Wilks, Peter Dyer, Claire Franklin,

#### **6. Closing matters**

Tim noted we have recruited committee members during the year and asked for anyone who can offer support to come forward.

It is hoped to have a meeting before Christmas.

The CycleWight Annual Accounts to October 2022 have been prepared by Jessica Garbett and issued are on the website.

Membership of Cycling UK has been renewed on a direct debit basis.

Thanks to IT team Malcolm & Matthew for the on-line link.

Thanks to those who made cakes, made tea & coffee, contributed raffle prizes, sold raffle tickets etc.