

# Isle of Wight Cycle Forum Minutes

18 October 2017 @ 6pm

Isle of Wight Fire & Rescue Service HQ, Newport.

Present:

Kevan Ansell (KA)	Routefifty7
Alec Broome (AB)	IWC Sports Unit
Dizz Dyer (DD)	Inst Advanced Motorists. Cyclist
Martin Gibson (MG)	Creative Interpretation Ltd
Chris Gregory (CG)	A-to-There
Luke Jeffery (LG)	IWC Sport Unit
Val Lawson (VGL)	Cyclewight & Wayfarers
Alex Lawson (AL)	Cyclewight & Wayfarers
Tricia Merrifield (TM)	British Horse Society
Nicky Metcalf (NM)	Wight Cycle
Andy Newman (AN)	Wayfarers, Cyclewight, Cycling UK
Ben Phelan (BP)	Forestry Commission
Justin Rylands (JR)	Forestry Commission
Tanja Rebel (TR)	Sustainable Transport
Tim Thorne (TT)	Cyclewight Chair, Wayfarers
George Wilks	Cyclewight

## 0. Introduction

Apologies were received due to conflicting council meeting from Cllr Julie Jones-Evans, Cllr John Hobart, Cllr John Medland. Plus Zoe Stroud (attending Smarter Travel Live! for Visit Isle of Wight), Jennine Gardiner (PROW), Rachel Mills(Island Roads), Iain Maclennan, Sandy Norris (Wight Walks), Ross Edmunds (Wight Cycle), Will Ainslie, John Lee, Matt Whittaker, Jan Brookes (Isle Access), Robin Lang (National Trust). No apology was received from Hampshire Police.

## 1. Police issues including safety & cycle theft

Hampshire Constabulary contacted TT regarding the large number of cycles stolen over the summer. They provided a Bike Record Card to be completed for each bike owned. It asks for model & frame number etc. It also has links to Crimestoppers 0800 555 111, [www.immobilise.com](http://www.immobilise.com) and has comprehensive crime prevention advice. The form is available from <http://www.cyclewight.org.uk/files/Hants-Police-Bike-Record-Card.pdf> or from [www.hampshire.police.uk](http://www.hampshire.police.uk).

Close Pass Mats are available to demonstrate the safe passing gap. Certain police forces have also targeted drivers who pass too close to cyclists. These initiatives have not appeared on the island. DD has spoken to police officers for Southampton & IW who say there are no resources. They were due to come to the Island but it was cancelled at the last moment. He added that in two years attendance at the cycle forum he has yet to see a police officer. KA suggested that we should seek to hold the Cycle Forum in a police station.

## 2. Island Roads

With respect to the CROSS-NEWPORT CYCLE ROUTE safety concerns were raised at the Cycle Forum in June (para 10), in particular the section past the Bargemans which we think is used as a rat-run at peak time and where motorists may not expect contra-flow cyclists. Island Roads have allocated **Enquiry Ref:16103682 – Little London, Newport** in response to our email on the subject. We requested further signs and road marking. Road Safety Engineer Ian Middleton responded that this would be investigated, that the speed and volume of traffic would be monitored, and that the green

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surface would be renewed eventually when the carriageway was replaced (the concrete foundation). We further requested in advance of this current meeting that the result of the traffic survey be provided but have not heard from Island Roads on this Enquiry Reference. However Rachel Mills has apologised for non-attendance.

In general Island Roads' communications with cyclists appear to show an inadequate awareness of the importance to the Island Tourist Industry of cycling visitors. MG suggested that the Cycle Forum should be treated as a body with a special status and be part of strategic discussions. TM suggested that we write to Bill Murphy (IWC) & copy Cllr Ian Ward and to Bob Seely MP who may take up the matter as a tourist issue. Since the meeting CW have sought further clarification on this. CW will write to Antony Cooke the officer within IWC who is responsible for the PFI contract.

### **3. IW Cycle Fest.**

This took place from 23 September to 01 October, see <http://www.iwcyclefest.com/> . GP Sport had been expected to attend the forum.

AN said that the Wayfarers were not given much information in advance. AB said the IWC Sports Unit received calls for information but had little to give out. LJ said he was in touch with Gareth Shilton and they hope to improve online access next time. TT said there was a full page advert in CYCLE UK and there was a County Press advert. The 50/100 mile event had about 200 participants, the last Saturday event was well attended, and the kids cross-country events were popular. AL noted the launch event was worthwhile for Cyclewright as there were serious enquiries for info on island routes & clubs – Wayfarers runs lists were given out.

### **4. Forestry.**

Ben Phelan as Solent Area manager and Justin Rylands as Recreation manager for the Forestry Commission introduced themselves and were happy to answer questions. They are based on the mainland but visit frequently.

AL said that Ben & Justin visited the IWC Local Access Forum and stated that the Forestry Commission was pro-cycling but stressed cyclists should only use Bridleways, Byways or Promoted Trails. So did this mean they would listen to suggestions from cycling groups for new trails? BP answered that they would consider suggestions but jumps would be a problem. JR said that where these exist they have to be well built & well maintained. "Gorilla" jumps are seen as a liability and are removed. His predecessor in post Jamie Kelly, who had attended the forum, had left notes on policies. BP explained that staff time is short to monitor permitted structures or routes, and this was problematic.

TT asked if volunteers could work with the FC to provide such infrastructure. MG noted that having previously worked with the FC regarding the Red Squirrel Trail he perceived that their organisation was set up when they were much larger. If the issue was shortage of staff time this might be surmountable by input from volunteers.

TT asked if there was a model elsewhere in the country? BP said one case has taken about 10 years from an illegal dig to now being ready to open officially.

VGL asked about Moors Valley Country Park which is very popular & provides employment & income. JR said the development was led by the Forestry Commission and now has 7km of tracks. They would consider a costed approach for trails provided it was official and not "gorilla". It was acknowledged that mountain bikers are the last people to be organised. However LJ said GP Sport are a large grouping who might come up with something. TT added that Cyclewright & the Cycle Forum would be keen to set up liaison between the Forestry Commission and cycling groups.

VGL said the IW Mountain Bike Centre (Chevy Chase) had made mountain bike routes on private land. DD asked who will follow up the possibilities? AB said mountain bikers will not form a committee to do this.

### **5. Isle Access.**

Jan Brookes has sent information that Isle Access is hoping to have regular events starting in the new year but is still looking for a venue.

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## 6. Access Fund

CG of A-to-There gave an update regarding the IWC funding of £1.3 million over 3 years which commenced this April, for a series of projects around education, work and tourism and aimed at increasing cycle levels and health. Part of the focus is the transition from primary to secondary school. The project will include bike maintenance and possibly cycle loans. Wight Cycle Training Ltd have been awarded the contract.

AB said he manages elements of this for IWC, and they have confidence in Wight Cycle as a local company. Further projects mainly involving tourism have just been released for tender and there will be more opportunity in the future. This also includes walking schemes. Luke Jeffery is leading Isle Be Active aimed at regular participation in sport as a healthy social activity. They will be in touch with the all cycle groups including the Wayfarers and Sunday Social to help.

VGL said she had tried in the past to start health rides for over 50's on the model of over-50's health walks which do take place. She asked about training for professional ride leaders. LJ said there are plans over the next 1-2 years to have cycle rides targeted at improving health.

AB said the IWC Sports Unit have arranged Level 1 Coaching Course run by British Cycling and they hope to resurrect this. These cost is high and so people do drop out. Costs are £150 for entry level and £500 and upwards for higher level training. TT said there would be a momentum over the next three years of funding.

## 7. A Cycling Strategy for the Isle of Wight

More about disability access and off-road facilities has been included, and it is hoped to release for circulation at the CycleWight AGM on 24 November. MG said detail of delivery was incomplete.

DD said the document has little to address the problem of improving behaviour of road users. The barrier to people taking up cycling was road safety. The County Press front page headline the previous week was cyclist "Left to die at side of the road". The police resources for traffic enforcement are inadequate.

TR said vehicles will still emit noxious fumes even if behaviour improves. Better cycle facilities & routes are needed, which means investment in infrastructure not just revenue. MG said once improvements are made then the need for infrastructure can be publicised. AL said many parish councils are not pro cycling even when there are already facilities used by lots of cyclists.

TM said there had been an equestrian accident when the horse slipped on the new road surface resulting in a bad injury to the rider and the horse having to be put down. Motorists did not stop to help. It is considered that the rural environment and narrow roads exposes horse riders, walkers and cyclists to extra danger, and that drivers (and cyclists?) from urban backgrounds need to be given more information. They may not be aware that there is a bridleway network, not just series of tracks round fields. The new safety director of the BHS has visited the island, and it is hoped to arrange a meeting to which cycling representatives and ramblers will be invited to discuss these issues. A booklet could be produced covering the use of rural roads and to circulated to road users including those preparing to pass the driving test. Note the bridleway network itself needs to be improved and road crossings made safer.

## 8. Other reports, sustainability, permeability,

**# Permeability Study:** MG confirmed that Cyclewight are reviewing Newport permeability. TT confirmed that we are seeking to input our views to IWC who have been awarded £9M to improve the transport infrastructure. VGL said that cycling access to the new ASDA does not work. MG said plans for the St Mary's Hospital roundabout have just been released; these appear to be the old plans. We need to keep talking to Planning. If capacity is simply increased around towns then something in the towns need to change to compensate.

**# Transition Island:** Tanja Rebel said the project meeting was this evening at the Riverside Centre and everyone was welcome to go after the forum. She would pursue sustainable transport initiatives.

**# Wayfarers' Randonnée:** Andy Newman said will take place on Sunday 6 May 2018. Please make contact if able to volunteer to help at checkpoints.

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## **9. AGM: Friday 24 November 2017, 730pm**

Location Carisbrooke Village hall. Speaker Tim Wiggins, commuter of the year, fund raiser and Wiggle worker. **\*\*\*AL to invite IW Cycle Forum members \*\*\*\***

## **Date of next meeting**

TBC February 2018, 1800. TBC Venue.

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