

CycleWight Committee, 9 Feb 2023 at Clatterford Rd & Zoom

Present: Alan Bennett (AB), Pete Dyer (PD), Claire Franklin (CF), Malcolm Ross (MR), Tim Thorne (TT), Mick Watts (MWa), George Wilks (GW), Will Ainslie (WA), A. Lawson (AL),
Apologies: Helen Jones (HJ), Matt Whittaker (MWh), Val Lawson (VGL)

1. Response to Island Roads Contract

TT wrote to Wendy Perera with questions regarding maintenance of the Island's network of shared paths. A reply received from Stewart Chandler sets out as they see it the obligations of Island Roads and the approach of IWC to network upgrades. This was circulated to the committee prior to the meeting.

PD said the reply misses the point about Bicycle Island with the cycling network as a safer alternative to using the road. The IWC and Island Roads have now confirmed that under the PFI there is no obligation to upgrade the network. CF suggested that the safety issue could be raised at the Active Travel Hub where she represents CycleWight. When Beryl Bikes made a presentation regarding bike hire and e-Scooter hire she criticised their lack of safety promotion (eg helmets)– but there has been no response from Beryl as their app still does not promote a safety first approach. Claire said people must feel safe on the cycle network in order to change from using cars to using bikes and to achieve the low emissions target of the LCWIPs. TT agreed that we should raise the matter with the Active Travel Hub. He believes that the Horingford to Merstone section is worse than when Island Roads took it over. It had been brand new in 2003.

MR said that Island Roads had carried out an upgrade to the footway in Binteard, opposite the golf course on the south side of the road. This was carried out unexpectedly, and apparently cost £73,500 for a 245m stretch. He would like to know who reaches these decisions and on what basis. Was it part of the LCWIP? Why was this improvement prioritised over the Blackwater track which is dangerous to users? Others had no more knowledge that he had, and MR agreed to write to ask for more information.

TT summarised that he would write to Wendy Perera and copy to Bob Seely MP. ****TT****

- Repairs are needed now to parts of the cycle network to meet safety standards and to restore the track to previous levels.
- A planned scheme of work to cover wear and tear of the network
- The IWC should identify and pursue projects for 2024-5 so that we can take advantage of funding then available.

PD said there seems to be no urgency of action to implement repairs to cycle tracks. TT said that CycleWight should decide on a hierarchy of projects. This should address things which will deteriorate in the future such as subsidence and tree root damage. GW said we should address maintenance as well as new projects, and added that Island Roads have a budget of £1million / month.

The government will provide a large active travel fund to local councils but we are unsure where responsibility lies within the IWC to apply for funding for LCWIPs? Agreed that we need to consider priorities on the island. **Action **PD & TT****

2. Thirtieth Anniversary CycleWight & 20 years Cowes Sandown

It is proposed to celebrate the Thirtieth Anniversary of the opening of the Cowes Sandown cycle track. The Saturday before Wayfarers Randonnee is proposed. TT has contacted parties on our list to ask for suggestions but so far no responses.

A Press Release should be prepared. A CycleWight display and a membership drive should be arranged e.g. at Merstone. Can we all look for photographs of events over the years to be displayed? ****Action TT & All****

3. CycleWight AGM – Actions to Take

As discussed previously a Friday in September is favoured. GW agreed to approach the Riverside Centre. Possible speakers were discussed. ****Action GW & TT****

4. Active Transport Hub

The Active Travel Hub is part of Together for Mission Zero, a community-led initiative that works in partnership with a range of stakeholders - including the IW Council - to help deliver a net zero future for the IOW. (See <https://togetherformissionzero.co.uk/> for more information).

Will Ainslie of People Powered CIC is the current chair and CF attends to represent CW.

The AT hub brings together relevant stakeholders to discuss practical ways in which improvements to active travel infrastructure and conditions for pedestrians and cyclists can be brought about. The emphasis is on agreeing actions and getting those actions done.

The group meets roughly monthly and there is a rolling "action plan" which is shared and updated after each meeting. CW have access to this via CF. The hub welcomes suggestions for new topics to be covered in future meetings.

Active Travel England is a new government-backed body aiming to promote active travel in England, with funding provided to councils to help build capacity (revenue funding) and, if applications are successful, construct new infrastructure (capital funding). The most recent capital funding round ("Phase 4) closes on 24 February and the IWC is currently working up a bid.

WA said there was an action plan which he has sent to TT for circulation.

5. Engaging with Councillors

With the object of inspiring elected councillors, a Q&A session at the Riverside Centre could be good. A cycle ride could be organised in May or June; a route via Medina Greenway to Island Harbour then via Fairlee was suggested. CF thought September would be good ie. just before the AGM. Follow up with centre. ****GW****

6. AOB

At Blackwater there are paint marks which have appeared: Is the track being repaired? There has been flooding again. TT said there is notice of possible track closure at Shide from 17 February to 17 April. There had been talk of drain valves which could be closed or open to

eliminate the flooding. He would contact Darrel to find out more.

PD said he has been authorised to obtain quotes for the road safety signs manufacture & installation at locations at the Whippingham roundabout in East Cowes. He hoped to set things going tomorrow. With the Red Funnel sponsorship there would be no cost to the council. With another possible sponsor further signs could follow. PD showed the image and logo artwork.

At Somerton Farm, Cowes there is an application is for 163 dwellings and 43 offices, accessed by a new spine from Newport Road, Cowes. TT submitted comments for CycleWight that the government planning guidance LTRN1/20 should be followed and that a new path should be developed to meet up with CS21 and the Medham Link to provide traffic free access onto the Cowes – Newport cycle track.

WA added that the Cowes/Northwood LCWIP also proposed a new access route from the Somerton Roundabout to the cycle track, as well as a route from Northwood into Cowes parallel to Newport Road.

We are aware of erroneous signage which misleads cyclists. The B&Q roundabout is an example. There are also examples of active travel schemes not delivered, such as cycle racks at The Range. CW should find if IWC Highways would be prepared to make efforts to fix problems brought to their attention.

PD added that Tesco had not installed cycle parking and signage as promised.

PD said the possibility of an LCWIP in the Sandown Bay area has been mentioned before. He has contacts with councillors and is keen to pursue this as the three authorities are already working together. It seems that the IWC may have this in hand already, but Peter could follow this up and help.

AL said the Local Access Forum in December recorded that a key landowner has withdrawn support from the West Wight Green Way so that the eastern end of the route is having to be reconsidered. <https://www.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/laf-minutes-01-12-22>

GW said that the St Mary's cycle shed by the front car park had disappeared, and asked for information.

Next Meeting : March