

CYCLEWIGHT Committee, 09 May 2019

Present: Tim Flynn (TF), Alex Lawson (AL), Tanja Rebel (TR), Malcolm Ross (MR), Tim Thorne (TT), Mick Watts (MW), Matthew Whittaker(MW), George Wilks (GW).

Apologies: Martin Gibson (MG)

1. COWES-NEWPORT CYCLE TRACK CLOSURE.

The track is closed from 23/4/19 to 13/6/19 between Arctic Road & the bottom of Medham. It will be open for May bank holidays including the Randonnee. It may also be open at weekends when work is not being carried out. The signed diversion for cyclists & pedestrians is up Arctic Road (which has no footpath), Newport Road and down the Medham link. TT points out that the height involved is the same as the height of Compton Cliff. He has written on behalf of Cyclewight to the IWC and to SSE to complain at the length of the closure, lack of consultation, lack of notice, distance & standard of the diversion route and the major inconvenience to those walking & cycling.

AL said former public utilities are able to close cycle tracks & roads including bus routes and there is no financial pressure for these to be re-opened. Until some sort of charge is imposed such as that on Network Rail when trains are delayed then the public will be inconvenienced by private companies for profit.

2. CYCLING STATS

These results from 2014 to 2018 have been analysed by MW. There are 12 counters across various routes and around half a million cycle journeys in total are recorded for each year. Sites at Island Harbour, Wootton and one site at Freshwater show continuous growth year on year. Sites at Shanklin to Wroxall, at Newport-Sandown, and at Newport-East Cowes are steady. A Freshwater to Yarmouth site shows a big drop in 2018 and some other sites also show an unexplained drop in 2018.

3. PATHS FOR ALL

The Paths for All Report was published in March. ON WEBSITE ?

There are 11 possible projects listed island wide with outline, strategic case, upgrade approach and Cost estimate. In discussion the improvement in the Belmont lane Fairlee Road area was seen as a priority.

Cyclewight will seek funds for projects improving cycle routes, and a possible source of funds is the South Western Railway's Customer and Communities Improvement Fund (CCIF). Schemes which meet a community or social need and show a link to the railway are funded for a two year period, and cycle transport & parking are seen as appropriate categories. We will advocate development of a Yarbridge to St Helens route east of the railway line forming a link from the round the island route at Yarbridge to Laundry Lane/Carpenters Road. This would follow the line of B69 from Yarbridge to the south of Brading Station where it would pass east of the station rather than using the level crossings and public highway, then follow B1 to the bridleways B2 and B75 to Laundry Lane.

This has in the past been discussed with the LAF, to Brading Town Council, and to West Wight Landscape Partnership. The RSPB own land which would be involved. AL to follow up.

4. CYCLE FORUM

Bike Week is 8-16 June, and this would be a good time to hold the Cycle Forum. Unfortunately the preferred location is unavailable; **alternatives to be investigated ****AL**** Wendes Hall Check suitable dates & book. ***AL*****

IW Mountain Bike centre to be invited – they were expected last time but did not make it. The course at Cheverton Farm has been much improved. Note previous minutes for 21 February to be published on website ...

5. St Mary's Junction Improvements; What next?

The improvement project appears to be on hold while IWC consult further. TT said that the IWC have a new executive David Evans, responsible for Highways projects. It was agreed that Cyclewight ask for a meeting to discuss cycle routes and in particular the surface quality of routes including Newport - Sandown (suggested by MW) and Shide -Blackwater (Suggested by TT). Also monitor that the Cowes – Newport re-instatement is carried out to a satisfactory standard (suggested by AL).

6. RIVERFEST

To happen on Saturday 18 May. Matt Whittaker & Tanja Rebel will provide a Cyclewight display. TT will prepare a newsletter in advance.

7. Cyclewight TREASURER

The new HSBC account has been set up, having been signed by Jessica Garbett the new treasurer, Tim Thorne & Alex Lawson as co-signatories. It was agreed that Jessica Garbett should have permission to sign for up to £250 on her own authority, in accordance with initiatives agreed by the committee and answerable to the Annual General Meeting of Cyclewight. This was proposed and agreed unanimously. TT is to advise HSBC accordingly.

8. Local Access Forum

AL said minutes record a meeting between Bob Seely MP, Cllr John Hobart, ROW manager Darrel Clark and LAF chair Mark Earp. The principal topic was the English Coastal Path on the IW, but also covered were the submission to the department for transport for the Island Line. Also discussed was the Camphill prison site which is the “largest brownfield site in the islands history” with potential for major housing development and a “once in a lifetime opportunity to connect the North West of the IW with the islands centre largely off-road”. The next meeting is on 6th June.

Minutes can be viewed at <https://www.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/download/laf-minutes-07-03-2019>

9. Randonnee

This was a success, with about 3500 riders. The Cowes Floating Bridge was well organised but limited numbers to 120 or so on each crossing leading to a 45 minute delay at peak times while riders queued. This could be a problem in poor weather.

10. AOB

There is an IWC Access Fund meeting scheduled for Monday 13 May from 10-12. Chris Gregory organises these meetings to monitor the funding streams. GW to attend?

There will a Mardi Grass /Carnival on June 29 as part of the launch of the Biosphere Project. TT attended an organising meeting which was postponed.

TR said butterfly-conservation.org 'Building Sites for Butterflies' programme advises how roads and cycle tracks can be managed to promote butterfly friendly wldflowers.

TR said the IWC Environment Forum is convened by Cllr Mundell and is held on the last Thursday of the month at 530pm, next on 30 May.

TR said mobile phone 5g radiation is a hazard & should be stopped. There is a meeting on Sunday 12 May at 3pm in the Unitarian Church Hall.

GW suggested a family friendly version of the Radonnee, which would avoid traffic pressure points such as Upton Cross. He had explored a route via Quarr- Ryde, Seaview, Brading track, Sandown Shanklin revetment, Shanklin-Wroxall cycle track and the Undercliff route to Niton. It could be developed and we could produce a leaflet.

TF said he had discovered the list of Electric Charging Points given in the Cyclewight Round the Island Cycle route. It should be given much more prominence: however it needs considerable updating and also checking in terms of voltages & socket outlets which are non-standard. TF to volunteer?