

CYCLEWIGHT Committee, 30 Mar 2021

Zoom joiners: Alan Bennett (AB), Jess Garbett (JG), Alex Lawson (AL), Malcolm Ross (MR), Tim Thorne (TT), Matt Whittaker (MWh), Mick Watt (MWa) George Wilks (GW), Apologies: Naomi Hyland (NH),

1. Closure of Newport-Sandown Cycle Track

The section between Alverstone Road & Longwood Lane is to close for 6 months from 15 March for six months, in order that Southern Water can install pumping and filtering system to save eels. Southern Water have planned this operation for some considerable time, but it appears that IWC PROW were informed only in mid February. A diversion is signed via a undulating route with many bends. Island Roads have been asked to introduce a speed limit on this road but claim it is not possible – although a CW member with knowledge of DfT regulations has provided detailed explanation of how to introduce and sign such a speed limit. This has been sent to IWC and SW. There is also a possible off-road walking route but not suitable for some bikes, wheelchair users and some walkers.

Tim has met with Southern Water and has been in touch with Island Roads & IWC officials. At the time of this meeting it seems the route is still open, but the closure is expected to go ahead and to last all summer.

MWh suggested that we place signs along the lines of “If you feel as enraged as we do about this blockage then join CycleWight.” It was noted that PROW have limited resources to deal with these arrangements. However CycleWight could draw on technical support and expertise & we should offer to do so. It was also noted that the section from Longwood Lane to Perowne Way is narrow due to grass and mud encroaching on the surface. This should be the responsibility of Island Roads. MR to contact IR.

2. Strava Metro vs loW counters for statistics

Matt Whittaker presented his analysis of the Strava Metro app counts versus the IWC cycle counters. The former provides the largest dataset available. The latter are fixed in 12 locations on the island, so provide limited information. However one count of the former correlates with ten of the latter (taken over 2019 data). Hence he argues that Strava data for the Island could be used to provide cycle usage data for locations where there is no physical counter.

A heatmap can provide visualisation of popular cycling routes. More info at <https://metro.strava.com/faq>

AB asked what use we would make of the information? MWh said we can use it to back up our discussions with IWC.

TT said the counter at the Sandown end of the cycle track is at Perowne Way, which will miss those following Golf Links Road & Station Approach. Further locations for temporary cycle counters are under discussion, including at Dodnor Lane to pick up those cycling from Cowes to St Mary's Hospital who are missed by the counter at the Newport end of the track.

3. Bells &

TT said we have 600 bells left to give away, plus we need more data to pass back. Suggestions: schools, St Mary's Hospital, Vestas, IWC officers who cycle.

Malcolm Ross & George Wilks will distribute bells on Easter Monday on the cycle route along Ryde seafront. TT will contact Ross Edmunds at Wight Cycle to ask him to pass on to schools.

TT also said we have been asked to help find cyclists who can act as guides to inexperienced cyclists travelling to work in traffic. This is through Brock Rogers & the Active Travel Fund, and some payment is available.

4. Cycle Campaign Strategy

TT said NH has reminded him to complete the Vision for Cycling document. TT will attempt to begin the process of writing this for consideration by the committee. *****TT*****

5. Regular meetings

We should have Cyclewight committee meetings on a regular basis. Once real meeting resume we could still have virtual meetings for convenience, so perhaps we could alternate. It was agreed to have the next meeting in the week of April 27-28-29. TT will poll members.

6. West Wight route

Little to add to last minutes. TT is waiting to hear back from Graham Biss. He has spoken to the Ramblers. Their committee were against one part of the proposed route; the north - south route close to Newport. The present proposal means walking on the Middle Road for a distance. However the IWC 21-23 budget includes funding.

7. Local Access Forum

The IWC PROW are advertising for new members of the LAF as there have been resignations. In addition new LAF Chairman Cllr Paul Fuller wishes to boost the attendance and to have deputies from organisations. Members are able to make recommendations to the council and to exchange information. AL said the forum is attended by ramblers, equestrians, landowners, parish & town councillors and others as members or observers as well as IWC officers. Jennine Gardner is the PROW secretary and she is good at sharing information from those organisations. TT said he will put this appeal on the CycleWight website.

Note the scheduled 1.4.21 meeting has had to be postponed due to election legalities. The agenda will include 1) the Newport-Sandown cycle track closure, and 2) a presentation on the Restoring your Railway bid. There is more on this on the IWC Regeneration website, and the study is made by the Centre for Economics and Business Research www.cebr.com -

8. Ryde Esplanade

MR has seen an Island Roads plan for Esplanade transport interchange. The pier tramway is to become a cycling & walking route and the current narrow pedestrian passage into the passenger hall is part of that arrangement. This is poor in Malcolm's view and he is seeking more information.

9. AoB

TT has heard from Lee Matthews that the Council's survey results on walking and cycling have been processed and are being acted upon - that is all we know. TT has asked for more information.

TT has heard from the IWC contract manager and a meeting is to be arranged to explain the different roles of personnel within IWC and IR linked to walking and cycling.

GW said he had followed through with a Greenpeace suggestion to lobby the local council regarding more sustainable transport. He then received a personal reply from Cllr Ian Ward. GW has replied to that but had no further response.