



LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

No 83 March 2015

Have you paid your 2015 sub? Have you returned your renewal form?

If you haven't done *both* of these, then Get A Move On!

Your 2014 subscription to LRBA lapses definitively on 31 March. If you normally pay by cheque there's not much time to pay up so you can enjoy our 2015 Rides or support our work.

And we need your Renewal Form so we're sure we know where you live, have your up to date telephone number and email address, and where you keep your horse and ride. And can list your offers of assistance. If all this info can be noted before our personal riding seasons begin, never mind the Rides season itself, it's a great help. The winter "lull" is a good time to get all the boring admin stuff dealt with so that LRBA's systems are ready for the off. A lot of hard work goes into running the Association and it doesn't help if we're chasing members for vital info when we should be getting on with Real Stuff.

So far, less than half of you have returned your renewal forms. Get on with it. Please.

2015 Rides Programme enclosed & more info on Page 3

***24th Annual General Meeting followed by
Buffet Supper &
talk on the "Rutland Mounties" rural crime-busters
by PCSO Di Freeman***

***Monday 20 April 7.30pm prompt to 9.30pm,
at Tilton-on-the-Hill Village Hall. LE7 9LL***

See pages 5-9 for more information and AGM papers.

£10 charge for supper & talk - booking form enclosed

BITS

Rutland County Council now has a central email for “compliments, comments or complaints” about its service – and for suggestions about improvement. Anyone with complaints about BWs in Rutland should use this system as it not only saves staff time (no long phone chats) but can be used out of office hours. Do also use it to thank and compliment the RoW dept when the problems are solved. The address is: letusknow@rutland.gov.uk

Derbyshire, Leicestershire & Rutland Air Ambulance, in thanking LRBA for its £400 donation, told us that they flew 1032 missions in 2014. That’s nearly 3 a day. A significant number will have been to equestrian accidents as we tend to injure ourselves “off road”. The charity receives no government funding so relies on donations. When you see a ‘bucket’ at one of our Rides, please give generously. A sum is always added from LRBA funds to the buckets’ total before the cheque is sent off. Learn more at www.dlraa.co.uk

Riding hat standards change. BSEN 1384 / EN1384 is being withdrawn by the EU from 1st Jan 2016. After that date hats bearing only this number will no longer be acceptable where hats are checked. BHS advises that hats made to ASTM F1163, PAS 015 (2011), SNELL E2001, and AS/NZ 3838 (2006) will continue to be acceptable. Correctly fitted hats to these standards must be worn on LRBA Rides and must, of course, be fastened when mounted.

Frisby on the Wreake, technical diversion of BW H48, Carrfields Lane. An Order has been made to divert the legal line of this BW from going through at least one house and two other gardens along Carrfield Lane. The builders of these houses failed to ascertain the correct line of the BW, so now there is now no alternative but to route it along Carrfield Lane, which runs between Church Lane and Mill Lane. Developers are always advised that existing PRoW on a site should be retained as “green corridors” and it is bad practice to run

them along new roads. As this technical diversion is making the best of a bad job – and makes it possible for the owners to sell their houses without legal problems – LRBA has said it will not oppose the Order. But we *do* Object when we see planning applications that appear to ignore the good advice. Local riders are unlikely to notice any difference.

Another diversion that’s unlikely to change things much is that of **BW T69 at Bosworth Battlefield Centre**, for which the Order has just been made. As the BW comes from **Shenton** station and enters the Centre’s grounds, riders veer left along the edge of the field. They should turn sharp left and go through some very rough ground – perhaps an old quarry but this route has not been available for some years and is being extinguished in favour of the field edge route. Both versions reach the drive to the Centre which is a BW from Ambion Lane and turns left (east) at the Centre to then go in a straight line out into fields and to the small car park on Ambion Lane. LRBA has asked that the blue arrows we should follow are correctly and clearly sited in the Centre, as this has not been the case in the past and riders have even been mis-directed through the buildings.

Exercising dogs from horseback. A question was put on to our Renewal Forms to find out how many members with dogs (lots!) exercised them whilst riding. Very few indeed. And those that did seemed to do it on their farm or with a well-trained older dog rather than a youngster. With so many complaints about loose dogs causing various kinds of mayhem, it’s good to be re-assured that the riding community – at least around here – is not contributing to the problem.

LRBA Posters – thanks to everyone who’s offered to get posters put up. They’re a good way of drawing attention to our events – and to our existence! But there are 2 places we send posters to automatically – **SLB Supplies at Wiggs Farm, Ellistown, and Riseholme Feeds, Wysall.** So anyone who’s put them on their list won’t get one for these locations.

2015 fun Rides programme

As well as 3 Evening Rides and 7 Saturday or Sunday Rides, we have a new venture. A “**Starter**” Ride on **Thurs 28 May at Hicks Lodge in the National Forest** aimed at tempting novice hackers out of the school and arena to sample the “great outdoors”.

This is a very appropriate event for BHS Access Week and if it's a success we hope members will help us offer similar, relatively small-scale, ventures in 2016. LRBA wants to develop its educational – and confidence-giving – role and this seems an ideal way to do it. The circular BW at Hicks Lodge, and the permissive route in the Forestry Commission's Shelbrook Wood on the opposite side of the road, will provide a gentle introduction. If you have a friend, or child, wanting to dip their toes – or hooves – in the hacking water, why not book them in and come as their experienced friend? The Ride is free, but ALL mounted entrants must be, or become, members before starting the Ride in accordance with our new policy.

After last year's cancellation due to wet ground it was a relief when we were able to decide on some very limited parking for the **Hambleton Bluebells Evening Ride** which will be our opening Ride on **Tues 12 May**. This may be a *bit* late for the bluebells but the views will be as stunning as ever from the usually inaccessible track.

- It will be book-in-advance-only (forms with entry fees by Friday 1 May), with *definitely no entries on the day*.
- Entries will be taken in order of receipt but priority will be given to horse boxes and trailers bringing their maximum load so that the initial 25 parking places are fully utilised. (We were trying to cater for at least 50 boxes last year.)
- *Local* riders riding-in will be welcome additions, but members trying to cheat by parking in unauthorised spots and riding in will *not*.
- IF we can find some extra, firm, parking those initially on the waiting list will be notified.
- Ride instructions and maps will be posted out on 5 May to everyone we can accommodate. It may be wise to put a 1st class stamp on your s.a.e.
- Parking will be tight. The parking stewards Must Be Obeyed!!!!
- As it will be verge parking, entrants are asked to come ready tacked up for a quick start and to depart swiftly at the end, so they don't linger on the quite busy Hambleton Road
- Entrants MUST wear their own hi-viz as we won't have our usual orange weskits.

We're glad to welcome back to our programme both the **Charnwood Forest Ride on Sat 16 May** and **Laughton Hills** in S Leics on **Sat 22 Aug**, neither of which have been in our programme for a few years. On Charnwood we hope to be able to use a permissive track which is not yet available but will add considerably to the connectivity of Forest routes when it is. Laughton incorporates both Saddington Reservoir and Foxton.

Prestwold (Tues 16 June) and **Wartnaby (Thurs 16 July)** will be our other two Evening Rides and we look forward to enjoying these two different routes. **Exton (Sat 4 July)** brings us a nice mix of BWs and private land courtesy of Lord Gainsborough, and we're hoping **Skeffington (Sun 19 July)** will escape the downpour that nearly drowned it last year. It is a marvellous route in High Leicestershire with long views from the *Midshires Way* and other BWs. **Gretton (Sun 16 Aug)** uses local BWs and the virtually permanent permissive routes on the Bulwick Estate where you ride with red kites and buzzards wheeling overhead. Our final two Rides, starting from beside other attractions, mean you can bring the family to amuse themselves whilst you ride. **Nene Valley (Sun 13 Sept)** is at Ferry Meadows with activities, including a steam train, for others. And **Conkers (Sat 10 Oct)** brings us back virtually to the start of our season and families can enjoy the displays and activities at the National Forest's Visitor Centre. Great for kids!

Cycle “Sportives” in 2015

Following last summer’s accident to an LRBA member during a “sportive”, we’ve been talking to the south Notts-based organiser of several of these mass cycling events. All *itp events* that come into Leics or Rutland will have a warning on their web front page about the popularity of horse riding in these counties, with a suggestion that cyclists should read the BHS’ advice. The link to this guidance will also be included in the email confirming every entry *and* in the event instructions just beforehand. So 3 opportunities for cyclists to learn how to behave near horses.

Sportives are not races but each participant is individually sent off and timed. They’re usually striving for a quick time rather than wanting to enjoy the scenery. Although in theory they should come past in a thin but constant stream they inevitably bunch up. Both can be upsetting to a horse. Our advice is to look at the relevant website and, if there are maps, check ALL the routes to see if any of them come near you. And, if one does, perhaps go in a different direction or take a day off, as it’s difficult to predict times as participants can vary from ambitious novices (going fairly slow) to semi-professional competitors (going quite fast).

The list below comes from a pdf supplied by BHS, which is on our website, and shows the events we *think* will affect our members but it’s difficult to judge without checking all the websites. Lincs-based events often come to us because we have the nearest hills! The *itp events* are the ones with extra info (see 25Apr for web address); for other events’ websites see the pdf.

Mon 29 Mar **Market Harborough LE16**, 48/96km *Alden Electrical Cycle Race*

Sun 12 Apr **Bourne PE10**, 80/112/160km *Market Deeping Sportive*

Sun 19 Apr **Peterborough PE2** 46/64/101 miles *Action Peterborough 100*

Sat 25 April, **Rutland Water LE15** S Shore 21/57/78/104 miles *Dare2B Rutland Cicle Tour*.

Routes are S of Rutland Water and N towards Bottesford. www.itpevents.co.uk/events

Sun 26 April *Cicle Classic ROAD RACE Oakham to Melton* involving professional teams.

Roads will be closed but it’s not clear if BWs etc going on to the roads will have early warning signs. Junior Cicle Race starts 9am from Oakham Market Place and does circuits in the Teigh, Mkt Overton, Barrow area and arrives Melton 11.25am. The main race starts 11am in Oakham, does 2 circuits of the Rutland Water roads in first hour, then goes up A606 and spends 3hrs doing hill climbs etc in the Cold Overton, Somerby, Owston, Burrough, Pickwell area, before going to Melton and out to Burton Lazars, finishing in Melton at 3.35pm. WE WOULD LIKE REPORTS ON ANY EARLY WARNINGS AND ANY PROBLEMS ON THE DAY. [Not an itp event]

Sun 3 May **Loughborough Univ LE11** 58/100/160 km *Tour of the National Forest Sportive*

Sun 17 May **Swadlincote DE12** 64/119/165km *The CC Giro Midland Monster*

Sun 7 June **Harby LE14** 39/80 km *Belles of Belvoir*

Sun 14 June **Grimsthorpe PE10** 112/82/60/25 miles *Grimsthorpe Challenge*. The 112 miles nearly reaches Syston, not far from Leicester. The 3 longest routes all cross at Cottesmore.

Sun 28 June **Oundle PE8** 100km *The Great Girl-Rilla Ride*

Sun 5 July **Southwick PE8** 58/88 miles. *Peterborough Cycling Club Sportive*

Sun 12 July **Sutton Bonington Campus LE12** 56/70/90/112 miles. *Leics Supertour*. Shortest route mainly in Charnwood Borough; longest as far S as Mkt Harborough.

Sun 30 Aug **Catmos College LE15** 58 miles *Crossrider* For cyclo-cross and mountain bikes, using off-road tracks, green lanes, BWs inc the Gartree Road. www.itpevents.co.uk/events

Sun 6 Sept **Oundle PE8** 50/75/110 miles *The Great Gorilla Ride*

Sat 12 Sept **Desford LE9** 122km *Open Hands Tour de Leicestershire*

Sun 11 Oct **Loughborough LE11** 65/100/160km *Tour of the National Forest Sportive*

24th Annual General Meeting of
Leicestershire & Rutland Bridleways Association
on Monday 20 April 2015, 7.30pm to 9.30pm
at Tilton-on-the-Hill Village Hall, LE7 9LL

The AGM is open to all members free of charge

For the buffet supper and talk afterwards a charge of £10 is being made and your booking form (enclosed) and cheque must be with the Membership Secretary by Thursday 16 April so we have the numbers for catering. Members' guests are welcome.

If you haven't already renewed your membership or returned your Renewal Form (if you pay by standing order) you can send these with your booking form to: **LRBA, Churcherie Lodge, Lyddington Road, Gretton, Corby, Northants NN17 3DA**

Agenda for AGM to start at 7.30pm prompt

1. Welcome and apologies for absence (apologies with renewal forms or to Hon.Sec – rgl@dmu.ac.uk or 01572 722329)
2. To approve the minutes of the “virtual” AGM of 2014 – to be tabled
3. To adopt the Annual Report for 2014 – below
4. To adopt the Financial Report and Accounts for 2014 – below
5. To appoint the Honorary Auditor for the financial year ending 31 December 2015
6. To elect the Honorary Officers of the Association. Those named have indicated they are willing to stand but nominations for these posts may be made in advance – with the consent of the nominated member – to the Hon. Secretary, or be made from the floor:
 - a. Chairman (Vicky Allen)
 - b. Hon. Secretary (Roger Linford)
 - c. Hon. Treasurer (Anne Grange)

The other officers are appointed by the Executive Committee

7. To re-appoint those members of the Executive Committee who have indicated that they are willing to stand again.

Kim Hall Anne John Liz Woolston
8. To seek nominations and appoint other members to the Executive Committee.
Nominations as for 6 above. **NB** The committee normally meets 3 times a year and in between conducts urgent business by email.
9. Any Other Business allowed by the Chairman.

7.55 pm Hot buffet supper featuring fresh local produce

8.35pm

The Rutland Mounted Patrol

Di Freeman, PCSO for Rutland South, hopefully assisted by a “Mountie”, talks about how these 60+ mounted volunteers assist the police in combating rural crime in Rutland. Di is a locally based horse rider and cyclist, so is also something of an expert in negotiating our way along rural roads. Followed by Q & A session.

9.30pm Vote of thanks and close

24th Annual Report 1 January-31 December 2014

Our 2013 Report started with a comment on the dreadful weather of 2012. It is perhaps right to start 2014 with a reminder that 2013-14's winter was the wettest for 250 years. And the wet weather continued into June, so that many fields were like grass-covered lakes until well into 'normal' summer.

Rides. Surprisingly we only lost one Ride to the wet weather. The *Hambleton Bluebells* Evening Ride which should have opened our season was first postponed until late May and then cancelled as we could not find firm ground for parking. Another of our initial ten Rides went when Leicestershire's Highways Dept would not re-open a byway closed for repair for half a day. This was a vital link on the *Sweystone* Ride in a route designed to enable riders to experience the new BWs on a restored opencast site near Heather and Ravenstone which is now part of a Diamond Jubilee Wood.

Although rain was set to affect the *Gretton* Ride on 7 June it went ahead in relatively light rain. So did the *Skeffington* Ride on 10 August although that was in the face of the "remains" of Hurricane Bertha. 13 Riders were able to use a length of the former A47 between Skeffington and Billesdon that had suddenly been promoted from footpath to BW. The Organisers of both these Rides would have appreciated at least a text from riders who'd decided to stay snug in bed. It's no fun standing in the rain waiting to know if anyone else is going to turn up.

The other six Rides all went ahead in weather ranging from scorching (*Wartnaby*) to ideal (most of the rest). The *Swinford* Ride which had been intended to celebrate an upgraded footpath replacing a BW lost in the rebuilding of the M1's Junction 19, had to be content with an enjoyable tour of Leics and Northants because the contractors had failed to order the 2 bridges needed – 1 over a ditch, the other over the infant R. Avon. Many of us took the opportunity to ride up the middle (on a track) and down one side (on a road) of a large wind farm. With no ill effects reported at this, our second 'turbines ride'.

It was a shame that, of the 3 Rides intended to celebrate new routes we lost the whole Ride at Sweystone and the new route at Swinford. In spite of losing the well-supported *Bluebells* Ride we had a total of 370 entries for the 8 actual Rides. These were shared between 117 members and 112 non-members as some did several Rides and worked out at an average of 46 entries per Ride.

As ever, we are grateful to the Ride Organisers and all their helpers who work very hard to give us a good day out. Like graceful swans, a lot of hard paddling goes on 'underneath' to achieve that serene illusion that everything is easy. Sometimes it is; other times there's a whole world of drama going on behind the scenes. It is always much appreciated when thanks are given, either at the Ride or by email, telephone or letter afterwards. We also need to thank our Hon Treasurer for sorting out the accounts for each Ride afterwards.

AGM and first affiliated group. Following the changes to our Constitution in 2013, we held our first "virtual" AGM in 2014, with all voting by post. As we can only do this for two years on the trot, we shall keep flexibility by having an "actual" AGM in the old style whenever we can.

The Blaby Recreational Riding Association "affiliated" to LRBA in the summer and a successful joint meeting was held on 29 October at the very pleasant Blaby Civic Centre (a.k.a. the old police station). We had encouraging news about the prospects for riding in the planned but not-quite-there-yet Countesthorpe Country Park. We need to make sure that the intended 'channels

of communication' work so that the purpose of the link, keeping each other informed about what's going on in and around Blaby District, operate as intended so that we can make mutually supportive representations.

Membership was again static, ending the year with a total of 386; short of our 400 target. There were slightly fewer non-renewals this year – a good sign – but fewer new members; not so good. Although the decision to require all Ride entrants to be members from 2015 was initially taken in the middle of the year, the need to boost membership and so give more riders the opportunity to understand more about our core work was undoubtedly a factor as more members mean we can wield more influence. Membership also produces, over time, more skilful and knowledgeable, so hopefully happier, hackers.

2026 and All That. If claims are not with highway authorities (Leics and Rutland County Councils and Leicester City) by 31 December 2025, then all rights that were there before 1949 but are not now recorded on the relevant Definitive Map will be lost. It will no longer be possible to use historic evidence to claim riding or carriage driving rights over a footpath, or over a route that is not formally recorded in any way. Given that it can take months of 'spare' time to find enough evidence and put together a claim, the time left to do this suddenly seems very short.

LRBA made a start by putting in two claims and supporting the upgrade of a third in Woodhouse parish near Loughborough, but based on user rather than historical evidence. If each parish (and there are over 300 parishes in our two counties) could also claim three BWs, think how that would transform our riding? Longer and more enjoyable networks, less road-work. What a legacy to hand on to our children and grandchildren. However we need at least one volunteer per parish. Or several volunteers working to put together a "new map" across a group of parishes – as old routes tend to go from village to village and then on to the next.

It is fascinating work but best suited to those who have time, perhaps because they are now free of work and, in some cases, regrettably free from horses or at least free from horses that require a lot of attention.

Personally I am finding it fascinating to return to my old love of archives – I once worked rescuing them in tin trunks from solicitors' damp cellars and despatching them to better places – and I intend to spend more time on this and need to drop some of the LRBA admin. But I would love it if some of you would join me. The Unrecorded Ways Group of the Leics Local Access Forum is putting together a list of 'vulnerable' routes and also a list of what documents are available for each parish. Also a method of recording what's been found. So very shortly there will be a framework to guide and support us all. Rutland is included in their lists.

Some wins. Apart from the new BWs in the Diamond Jubilee Wood and the replacement BW near Junction 19, mentioned in the Rides section above, both of which have come to fruition after years, if not decades, of asking and planning, it has just been announced (30 Jan 2015) that a diversion to which we objected at Pocket Gate Cottage, Woodhouse Eaves, has been refused by the Planning Inspector. The case was settled by the Written Representations procedure, which involved several site visits during the summer with measuring tape and camera and some hard days' work putting together the arguments in objection, being careful to only include well-considered points that were relevant to the tests that were to be applied. There was a loud cheer when the letter was opened and Woodhouse Parish Council has formally acknowledged their appreciation of the major part LRBA played in getting the decision.

At the end of our 2013 Report BW R67 at Crown Farm, Nailstone was mentioned as being so bad that we hoped that LCC would have no choice but to take action. They have. The farmer was written to by the Legal Dept in November and we are now waiting for the next steps. We are joining with the Ramblers to keep LCC marching onwards to sort out this problem.

Our Executive Committee remains at the dangerously low level of just six members. With four required for a quorum, it doesn't need much for a long-planned meeting to meet without being able to formally make decisions. We could do with at least two more members and it would be so nice to have volunteers rather than to go out and twist arms. It is particularly useful if professional skills can be brought to our discussions. Recently some engineering advice would have been useful.

All the current members – Kim Hall the Vice-Chair, Roger Linford the Hon. Secretary, Anne Grange the Hon Treasurer, Liz Woolston the Membership Secretary and Anne John our long-time loyal supporter and convener of the East Harborough Area Meeting – do sterling work both at the 3 meetings a year and in between by email. Their advice is invaluable and the varying experiences they bring lead to stimulating discussions. I, and every other member, owe them our thanks and gratitude. Thank you.

*Vicky Allen, Chair
11 February 2015*

Treasurer's Report for 2014

Members will see from the Accounts on the following page that in 2014 our income was considerably down, by nearly £1500, mainly due to reduced income from our Rides, there being only eight Rides and, on average, fewer riders per Ride. This reversed the increase in 2013. Membership fees were very slightly less; we seem stuck at 380-plus members and unable to meet our target of 400.

Overall expenditure was down by about £300 on 2013 although *Newsletter* costs rose, due partly to a change in printer and partly to a significant increase in postal charges. Our "virtual" AGM, with all the business conducted by post, cost us nothing, but room hires were higher mainly due to having an emergency all-day meeting in Preston village hall to work out our priorities for Rutland Highway's 2014 Capital Prioritisation List, the interim results of which are encouraging.

Travel Expenses were £500 lower but a new (second-hand) laptop was purchased for our Chair to replace her well-used and technologically decrepit one. We also spent £738 to have a culvert built to link a BW in Rutland to one in Leics. This was the first time for many years that we had contributed to bridleway structures and the Executive decided that funding this from the John Trout Legacy would be a project that John would have supported. This virtually extinguishes this fund which had previously been used to purchase the orange weskits used at Rides. So we hope members will agree that this legacy has been wisely and beneficially spent on two different aspects of LRBA's work.

The overall balance between Income and Expenditure was a small loss of £108.14 which has been deducted from the Accumulated Fund in the Balance Sheet.

Although the Executive Committee spent some time in 2013/14 looking at how much to allocate from our balances to various potential calls on our funds, it has been decided not to show these as separate allocations in the Balance Sheet but to retain them as Guidance in our Policies and Guidance documents.

The Association continues to have healthy finances and I am most grateful to our Hon. Auditor for his help and advice.

*Anne Grange, Hon Treasurer,
February 2015*

LRBA INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT to 31 December 2014:

(final figures for 2013 in brackets)

	£	£		£
Opening cash float		200.00		
<u>Expenditure</u>			<u>Income</u>	
General Administration:			Membership subs	3780.04
(3322.01)			(3810.04)	
Membership sub refunds	10.00			
Printing & stationery	555.58			
Definitive Map research	231.18			
Publications & maps	81.68			
Affiliation fees	114.00		Miscellaneous	
Travel expenses	611.45		Bank interest (10.42)	16.91
Professional fees & honorarium	510.00		Sale of HiViz vests (20.00)	00.00
Equipment purchases	150.00			
Miscellaneous	<u>12.28</u>	2276.17		
Newsletter & Membership forms		1193.05	Newsletter Advertising	0.00
(1011.89)			(0.00)	
Meetings & Social Events (215.15)			Meetings & Social Events	
AGM expenses		00.00	AGM income (0.00)	0.00
Other meetings		330.82		
Rides (1704.60)		1622.07	Rides (3751.60)	2563.00
Donations (490.00)			Donations (304.10)	
Derbys, Leics & Rutland Air Ambulance		400.00	To LRBA	5.00
			Charity Collections	286.89
Projects: Market Overton culvert		<u>737.87</u>		
Total Expenditure (6866.01)		6759.98	Total Income (7906.16)	6651.84
Surplus/Deficit (+1240.15)		<u>-108.14</u>		
		<u>6651.84</u>		<u>6651.84</u>

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 December 2014

<u>Liabilities</u>	£	<u>Assets</u>	£
Accumulated Fund at 1 Jan 2014	14317.16	Deposit Account	13805.06
		Current Account	803.96
			14609.02
Less Deficit for year	<u>-108.14</u>	Less Uncashed cheques	<u>400.00</u>
	<u>14209.02</u>		<u>14209.02</u>

Based upon the documents, records and explanations as provided to me, I am of the opinion that the Income & Expenditure Account shows all the income due and expenditure incurred for the period and that the Balance Sheet shows the true position of the Association as at 31 December 2014.

Signed: P C Daulby FMAAT, Hon Auditor
26 February 2015

Relief as BW diversion not confirmed

Bridleway K57 at Pocket Gate near Woodhouse Eaves was the subject of an application for a (very short) diversion in early 2005 after strong complaints about aggressively barking dogs in the grounds of the Cottage. Now, almost ten years later, the Planning Inspectorate has declined to confirm the Order, which has resulted in much local rejoicing.

Why? Partly because there's a suspicion that the homeowner was using – or at least not restraining – his two dogs running loose in 2004-5 to frighten people off using the BW, which runs between his house and garden and a completely detached garage.

But mainly because diverting K57 to the other side of the garage would put it between the garage and a brook into which there's a 1.5metre drop, and – as measured by us – a maximum of 2.8 metres usable width between the garage and the vegetation growing on the stream bank. A width that would shrink as the bushes grew out. But the Order required a minimum of 3 metres.

It was not a point at which a rider would want to meet anyone coming the other way, especially as, going towards Loughborough, there was no way of assessing the progress of walkers or cyclists coming towards you.

This BW is very well used by walkers and cyclists and, if safe, by the horses kept on the southern edge of Loughborough and in Woodhouse Eaves where there are several yards. The barking dogs had considerably reduced the horse use. Riders understandably do not want their horses to be upset amongst walkers, often with children or dogs, and frequently-speeding cyclists.

The unsafe diversion was not likely to be any more attractive, even though the dogs seem to have succumbed to old age and have not been replaced.

Possibly because of some horse riders being on the parish council, and undoubtedly because of the contribution the livery yards make to the village economy, we had the support of Woodhouse Parish Council throughout in resisting this diversion. They had had the benefit of legal advice when opposing the 2005 Order (which failed because of a technicality with the map) and this was a significant factor in the failure of the 2010 Order which replaced it.

The legal advice said the 3 tests required under Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980, namely:

1. that it is expedient in the interests of the landowner to have the RoW diverted
2. that the new route will not be substantially less convenient to the public, and
3. that it is expedient to confirm the Order having regard also to
 - a. The effect of the diversion on public enjoyment of the bridleway as a whole, and
 - b. The effect the Order would have with respect to other land served by the ..way

should, as a result of the decision in the *Young* case, be considered as 3 separate issues, rather than a balance between the three.

The Inspector's key decision here was that it failed the second test under which she had considered "*length, width, gradient, surface and limitations in the context of the role Bridleway K57 plays in the local network. I have also addressed safety issues under this heading.*"

It was safety that played a key role, backed up by intensive measurements (and photographs) taken by our Chairman, which were backed up by a well-argued assessment of how riders would cope, or not cope, with conditions if the diversion was confirmed. The Order decision refers to this assessment a number of times.

[Bridleway K57 runs from the top of Beacon Road, Loughborough, to the bottom of Dean's Lane from which there is access to Beacon Hill Country Park. The Order was decided through the Written Representations procedure rather than the better-known Public Inquiry mechanism. Ed]

FOR SALE Rider given up, so saddle, tack, rugs, grooming kit, stable mats, jodhpurs, boots, rugs MUST GO. Bargains! Tel. 01949 860640 (Melton area)

Riding in Bus Lanes – query

Q *Just wanted to find out if you should legally ride in a bus lane or in the car lane? There is a stretch of the Leicester Road [A426] at Glen Parva we use to get to the Great Central Way. It is very busy so would prefer bus lane, otherwise buses to left and cars to right, horrid!* Sharon

A Precisely so you don't have vehicles both sides of you, the BHS advice on turning right is to do it from the left hand gutter and on roundabouts to go round the outside. So the "things on both sides" situation is recognised as dangerous as well as being horrid.

For safety use the bus lane or the verge if there is one, but there probably isn't from what I recall of that road. But I would get through that stretch as quickly as possible – trot if you can so that you're not 'in the way' for long.

If cyclists can use a bus lane (which they usually can), then I don't see why ridden horses can't. It's highly likely that the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) setting up the bus lane failed to mention ridden horses anyway – so you're probably not disobeying the terms of the Order.

A police inspector once said to me that he would prefer us to be slightly illegal than a traffic accident – he didn't want to deal with either the blood or the paperwork. *Vicky*

Election Coming Up. What do WE Want?

Some of us may be lucky enough to meet a candidate face to face in the five or six weeks. It's a great opportunity to say to those who fancy themselves as "movers & shakers" that they MUST remember the recreational riding community.

Would-be MPs may like to think they have some control over national planning guidance – building more houses, roads, railways, industrial estates – whatever. Would-be local councillors, if there's a local election, will definitely want to affect what's built for what they consider is "the better".

Wouldn't it be great if national planning guidance said that every development had to contribute to off-road provision for the Vulnerable Road Users – the walkers, riders and cyclists who have to share our narrow English lanes with more and more impatient vehicles? Either they had to put in a track along their existing road frontage or pay into a fund which could be used for this purpose anywhere in the parish.

Better still would be a change in the law that said all designated Public Rights of Way are to be open to all classes of non-motorised users, provided that there is no insuperable physical impediment. Horses can't use normal flights of steps for instance, but there's no reason why stiles can't be replaced by gates.

And for local would-be councillors? They should make sure that horse-riders – who contribute significantly and directly to the often-neglected rural economy – are not excluded by intention or signs or path 'furniture' from any routes designed to encourage "sustainable" transport, i.e. walking and cycling to shops, work etc. And they should campaign for those funds to be set up so that it's not just villagers but all parishioners who have some benefit from development.

*And almost any seeker of your vote needs to be asked **What are you doing for horse riders?***

Spring 2015 Area Meetings

All members and their friends are welcome to our Area Meetings where we discuss problems and look for opportunities to improve your local riding. The Notes of the Autumn 2014 meetings were circulated with the last *Newsletter* and copies will be available at the meeting. If you can't make your *local* meeting, please feel free to come to the next most convenient one. Members from outside the 2 counties are welcome too - don't feel excluded.

Each meeting will also be asked to inform/advise LRBA on the following:

- Permissive or informal routes you ride - their *precise* location & route & what, if any, permission has been given. So we can check if they need 'defending'.
- Are cyclists a problem to you as a rider? What would help?
- A local Starter Ride? Venue adjacent to interesting short circuit? How to publicise it?
- Any suggestions for events to mark our 25th Anniversary next year?

If you want something else discussed at a meeting, to ask for directions or give apologies, please use the contact details at bottom of this page or the number given for the venue.

Mon 13 April MELTON AREA 7.30pm Sycamore Farm Cottage, Harby, LE14 4DB, courtesy of Jean Stanley. Drive opposite RES Tractors sign on Harby-Eastwell road. 01949 860640

Tues 14 April NORTH WEST LEICS AREA 7-9pm Marlene Reid Centre (MRC), Belvoir St, Coalville, LE67 3PH. Parking in Marlborough Sq or behind Centre.

Mon 20 April, AGM at Tilton, see front page.

Wed 13 May EAST HARBOROUGH AREA (Harborough District E of A6) 7.30pm at Keythorpe Lakes LE7 9EX. Take A47 to Tugby, go through village and at x-rds go straight ahead. Look for buildings and BW sign on L. Turn L here and go past houses, bearing L and down slope to "bungalow".

Thurs 14 May HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH AREA 7.30pm Sutton Cheney Village Hall, Main St (nr Hercules Revived pub) CV13 OAG.

Mon 18 May BLABY & WEST HARBOROUGH AREA 7.30pm Blaby Civic Centre, 22-24 Leicester Rd, Blaby LE8 4GQ All members of Blaby Recreational Riding Assn also invited.

Tues 19 May RUTLAND AREA 8.00pm Preston House, Preston (corner of A6003 and Main St) LE15 8NJ. Courtesy of Mrs Sheila Ervin. 01572 737263

Wed 20 May CHARNWOOD AREA 7.30pm The Boat House, Bridge St, Barrow on Soar, LE12 8BN

HOW MUCH DO HORSES COST A YEAR?

Don't forget we're asking you to record how much - in total - your horses cost in 2015. ALL expenditure; however large, however trivial. We'll be asking for round figures - number of horses, number of £s - at the end of the year.

Keep Counting - as we'll be using the totals to make the case for more BWs in return for how well horse-keeping supports the rural economy.

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