

RUBY RIDERS

Notes of Meeting held at Cookworthy Forest Centre 18th August 2011.

Present:	Steve Gardner (DCC)	SG
	Caroline Gatrell (DCC)	CG
	Mark Betson (Ride the Ruby Country Co-ordinator)	MB
	Chris Ingram	CI
	Philip Hackett	PH
	Sandra Boycott	SB
	Maggie Melville	MM
	Richard Leonard	RL
	Lynne Hughes	LH
	Jonathan Rowlands (DCC)	JR
	Peter Sainsbury (Cornwall Council)	PS
	Steve James (Photographer)	SJ
	Ann Webster (and Jasmine!)	AW
	Sarah O'Connor	SO

1. Introductions.

SG opened the meeting with introductions around the table. SG emphasised that the meetings are open to anyone with an interest in riding in Ruby Country and, as such, if you know anyone that may be interested then please invite them along.

2. Matters arising from last meeting (SG)

Cookworthy: Russell Collins (Forestry Commission) has created an unsurfaced track and would appreciate feedback. SG to provide an up to date map of where the route is once status of forest road has been checked.

CI - requested markers showing the route. SG - the Forestry Commission may not want that because of the implications for it to survey the route if waymarked, likewise MB did not want Ruby logo marker on. CI - something definite needs to be put at start at least. MB to discuss with Russell.

SB – Queried whether Natural England were still discouraging riders on Whiteleigh Meadow due to sensitive nature.

CG – Suggested chasing Natural England up. SG agreed & suggested writing to Natural England and c.c. Ros Mills. CI said it would be deteriorating again before anyone used it.

PS – Told meeting of multi-use trail from Bude and of the proposed linking of various trails from the Cornwall side with Devon. Egloskerry, Lanhydrock, missing links using mostly railway lines or through fields, mostly off-road.

CI – Brought up the question of what the routes are being called, they should not be referred to as “cycleways” when they are in fact multi-use.

PS – Was under the impression that it was physically not possible for horses to use the cycleway between Lydford and Station Road, Bridestowe. LH informed him to the contrary.

SG – It is because of a restrictive covenant banning horses from a section of the Granite Way. This was imposed when DCC purchased the land 10 years ago. SG is negotiating its removal with the landowner. RL - Asked the legality of no horses. SG - It would be falling foul of planning permission. SG – may be appropriate at some point in the future for this to be recorded as a public bridleway.

3. Ruby Rides Guide

A new guide is being drawn up by DCC and Ride the Ruby Country of 6 circular routes in Ruby Country, suitable for walking, riding and cycling. SG also keen for BHS to be involved in this. Funding for project is from DCC through the Ride the Ruby Country Project.

MM – No use having nice guides if some BW were not useable, need local warden input.

SG We hope to avoid problems by consulting riders on the proposed routes in advance. Also, your help is needed – if you have any suggestions on the proposed routes or any interesting information about anything on or near the routes then please let SG know. (NOTE: SG will make the draft maps available on the DCC website soon).

4. Rights of Way Improvement updates

Simpson Barton – SG has looked at route and concluded that the main track would appear to be the most appropriate route.

- a) **Lower Melbury** – SG – Diversion almost complete. Only needs bridge installing, which is already on site. Hopefully open within a couple of weeks but diversion order still to be confirmed.
- b) **Cookworthy to Halwill Bridleway**. Official opening proposed for Thursday 15th September 2011. Riders and supporters welcome, meet at Cookworthy Forest car park (not the hub) 9.30am. Riders can then ride one of the circular routes following the official opening. SG Further details to follow.
- c) **Northcombe Plantation** diversion proposal SG – divert current Bridleway (from A3079 into the plantation (2 local riders who this would adversely affect could negotiate to keep private access on original line for them)) onto forest road with a short section parallel to A3079 to create straight-over crossing of A3079 with corral on Forestry Commission side. LH commented that this is diverting a bridleway from a field onto a hard track. SG suggested that the Forestry Commission may consider making an unsurfaced track within the Northcombe Plantation much like the one within Cookworthy Forest (SG has not raised this with the Commission). The proposed diversion would also then create a link to the proposed route of the Pegasus Way.

- d) **Halwill bridleway13 / Beaworthy bridleway 11** - Works now complete except for some drainage works at the north end (in hand).
- e) **Pegasus Way Phase 2** (Venndown Gates to Halwill Junction) SG – Has met all landowners between Venn and Ashbury with agent. New DCC appointed agent to discuss further with landowners' agent.

5. Maintenance Matters

Langtree bridleway over common – SB – Parish Council wanted a bridleway across common but Natural England not too forthcoming.

CI – Need to know who the objectors within Natural England are.

RL – Write to NE and ask for site meeting.

Verges – Discussion, regarding who is responsible and what action. SG explained the new Neighbourhood Highways Groups.

The key message is that any problem with anything to do with highways (roads) or public rights of way should be reported to

0845 155 1004 or customer@devon.gov.uk
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You can copy this to your local County Councillor. Using this system means that your report is trackable and will be directed to the correct officer at DCC. SG will attempt to get someone from the new 'Torrington Group' (which covers Ruby Country) to attend the next meeting.

LH raised ongoing issue with verges. Either start again or write to L. Wilmington as suggested by Bruce Pedrick. Lobby County Councillors, write to PC. Quote 1980 Act Section 71. Councillors each have significant budget which they can allocate to local needs. Parishes within the Parish Paths Partnership scheme can bid for funding for specific projects.

6. Any other business

PH – Asked if South West Riders webpage could be linked from DCC PROW webpage. SG – may not be feasible as too many groups would have to be included, however, new DCC PROW website will have a horse-riding page, which could provide link to South West Riders. PH Also asked about South West Riders being a consultee on DCC's PROW consultation list. SG confirmed that BHS already a statutory consultee and the onus is more on local groups tracking e.g. the Committee Reports section of the DCC webpage.

SJ – Raised the issue of lack of parking when using the various rights of way.
SG – Knows this issue needs looking into, maybe approach landowners.

CI – Multi-use policy needs underpinning with robust action. Needs to be seen to be working. Granite Way needs tracking.

- RL – Reciprocal web links. MB will set up a SWR page on Ruby site.

- SJ – Suggested SWR contact RC etc. to encourage membership.
- LH – Surfacing of new routes. Why can't natural surface be left at the side for horses? PS - Thought this would be a cheaper option and future maintenance may well have to be undertaken by volunteers anyway. Easier to keep as grass. LH to e-mail PS photo of Pennine Way showing the mixed surface used there. PS will be finishing soon but future contacts – Chris Harides, TRAC Manager charides@cornwall.gov.uk and Kate Gason TRAC Project Officer, Cornwall CC (keen rider). They have been working with Adrian Bigg (BHS) Ideal people to make contact with.
- LH - Old maps showing routes, similar in status to current roads and bridleways Warren/Blackbroom area Bratton Clovelly, had been sent to SG for consideration in linking current bridleway from Mendea to Blackbroom bridleway. SG suggested SWR approach landowners with the idea rather than DCC, he will let SWR have chapter and verse of potential compensation rates and typical works to encourage landowners. CG suggested parish records. SG will let CG have copies of the maps LH sent him.
- AW Suggested gate as safety measure on new Halwill BW to stop horses escaping onto road should riders part company. SG – Others would want fewer gates. Will ask landowners to keep current gates closed as much as possible to help alleviate this matter.
- MB – working with Country Sports South West.
- SB – Barry Parsons being at hearing regarding proposed clay pigeon shoot near bridleway, made huge difference and carried the vote in favour of bridleway. However, it is going to appeal.
- AW – Suggested better horse crossing signage. LH seconded this and showed photo of "Horses Crossing Sign" near White Horse Garage, Tedburn. SG – Suggested that this may be an unauthorised sign. He is looking into requesting a blanket dispensation from the Department for Transport to allow horse signs giving indication of distance "to crossing".
- Mike Stone now P3 rep on Halwill PC.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed but probably Thursday 24th November 2011 at 1.30pm at Cookworthy Forest Centre. SG available all day for a chat.

Many thanks to Lynne for typing up the notes so swiftly again!