

## RUBY COUNTRY EQUINE INTERESTS GROUP

### Notes of Meeting held at Cookworthy Centre 18<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Present:	Steve Gardner (DCC)	SG
	Caroline Gatrell (DCC )	CG
	Jonathan Rowlands (DCC)	JR
	Richard Reid ( Sec. Ruby Country Partnership)	RR
	Chris Ingram	CI
	Philip Hackett	PHa
	Sandra Boycott	SB
	Pam Human	PHu
	Richard Leonard	RL
	Jo Down	JD
	Janet Lander (Sec Endurance GB SW)	JL
	Mike Stone	MS
	Lynne Hughes	LH

### **2. Matters arising from last meeting**

### **3. Ruby Country**

RR – Bid gone in to 2 action groups LEAF/LAG. Both pockets of funding have been awarded. Looking to extend period of funding to roll over to March/April 2013. Funding is mostly for a co-ordinator.

PHa - The BHS saw this new funding as a flagship project as it was of national significance, the project was intended to be highlighted in forthcoming BHS publications which appeared regularly throughout the year to show the development of the project. This would be as a case study, but also have the benefit of achieving considerable publicity for the Ruby Country to sell the area nationally. He hoped that at the end of the project an event could be established incorporating the Ruby Way which could attract media coverage.

Ruby Country are taking over Cookworthy Offices hopefully from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010

Ruby website available to input comments.

RR- He was short of volunteers to run the project before the position of co-ordinator was to be advertised in March/April, which was a delay from the proposed start date of January/February. PHa - Asked, as he had done at the previous meeting, for the Ruby Business Forum to meet urgently as it was a strong group who were keen to be involved in Ruby, who were under the understanding from RR that they would step in to the breach in the event of the previous funding finish. PHa had personally offered to help RR run the project in the interim on many occasions with no response. He was concerned that the optimization of the Easter tourist trade was lost by the delayed start.

#### **4. Maintenance matters**

LH – Trees have been cut back in Wadland Woods to enable riders to avoid boggy section.

A new gate appeared on Wadland Barton BW, difficult strong bolt.

More stones been put on BW at Lower Voaden. Landowners need permission to alter surface of BW.

Trees have been cut down and are blocking access on BW between Blackabroom and Lower Voaden. This has been reported to DCC. Blockage has been there for some time.

CI – Parked routes (JR informed 10% are parked) Melbury has been parked for at least 26 years and will now form part of circular routes around Pegasus Way, so now needs priority. People have been struggling through it, but a fallen tree now prevents even this. Tim Freeman was looking into this. Promised to look at it in 2010. TF needs informing it is a priority. SG has potentially got funding in place for this. Tim Freeman believed to be negotiating with landowners.

PHu - Stone Quarry Lane, Is it possible for gate to be re-sited? Ditch causing a problem. This could be part of a circular route once the “Pegasus Way” opens. SG - Halwill PC part of P3 scheme and were keen to tidy it up. SG will speak to Ros Davies.

PHu – Buckland Filleigh (BW no. 2) has been very stony, but has now had a covering of earth put over it, not sure who has done this, but it is an improvement.

SB – Buckland Filleigh (BW no. 2) cattle grid is very difficult to use.

SB – Suggested hooking back gates when fields not in use.

SG – Sometimes hooking back gates is part of agreement when DCC supply gates to landowners.

RL – Someone had badly hurt their finger when trying to open “baffle catch” on a gate, finger had been caught in it.

LH – Had a fall after a similar catch had caught up in the ring of the horse’s bit, causing it to panic and break the bridle.

#### **5. Definitive Map Update**

CG – FP3 could be upgraded to BW to give access to riders parking in Cookworthy Centre car park.

SG – Forestry Commission would be happy to consider having a bridleway made using this footpath and then diverting through their land.

SG – Had identified possible areas of secure parking for horse boxes in Cookworthy woods. CI – Present car park had in and out facility which was helpful.

RR – Possible parking at Cookworthy Centre with charges.

JL – Had given up with car parks in the Morwellham area, too complicated a system and warned against this. Added to which riders were supposed to walk all the way (10 miles) not feasible. Lessons could be learnt from this.

SB – Wanted to know what the hold up was re: Langtree upgrade, it looks to be a drove. PC were in favour. Links with the Tarka Trail. SB will e-mail Alison Smith for an update.

SG – Tarka Trail Management Group has been set up looking at improvements that can be made to the trail or links. SG is a member of this group.

SB – Would like clarification re: Frithlestock unclassified road shown on definitive map.

**6. Ashwater FP 3 Historical Evidence** Already discussed under Section 5 above.

## **7. Rights of Way Improvement Updates**

SG – “Pegasus Way” phase 2 ( Venn Down Gates – Cookworthy). Believed to be 20/25 landowners involved, not 40 as previously thought, most of whom will use land agent. SG plans meeting in late March / early April with land agent to discuss this further. Devon County Council will consider the route in its entirety and is happy to enter into agreements with landowners at any time (no priority for any one section over another).

LH – Was funding still going to be available if a change of government. SG – Should be OK for 18 months.

SG – Bowerland Woods new BW now open, but not yet ready for use. Contractors currently working on it. The plan is to only re-surface problem areas.

SG – Cookworthy Lane End Cross. Forestry Commission plans to start work soon to create a link on its land with the private track that runs to the A3079 near Lane End Cross. SG negotiating with other landowners to establish new bridleway.

SG – Whiteleigh Meadow – New boardwalk has been installed. Riders encouraged not to use meadow at present and to follow any advisory signs on site.

CI – Spoke to Colin Jones, Natural England, re: Whiteleigh Meadow and it is only being piloted for a limited time. Public need to know when it is open. Plans needed to get sufficient people using it. Ruby Country could help here. There is only one circular route. Talk to Martin Webb about this to make links.

RR – Has spoken to Forestry Land Agent, who says they are open to more ideas. RR noted that horse riders do not need engineered roads just tracks which are much cheaper.

SG – confirmed that Forestry Commission preference is for “permissive” access, not “definitive”.

PHa – Hollow Moor improvement important as links Tarka Trail and “Pegasus Way”. It is currently saturated.

SG – Ruby Way – Contractors have started work Coles Mill – Anvil Corner. PHa asked for an update on the situation at Simpson Barton which was an area which was under negotiation with a landowner who currently did not want horse riders to cross his section. This had led to a situation where there had been great strength of feeling locally that riders and local equine businesses were being compromised. Locals also felt that “Des Shadricks dream” of making the Ruby Way a “corridor of equestrian excellence” as he referred to it, was being compromised. This at one stage was leading to a situation where local protesters were about to take the situation in to their own hands. A similar situation was flagged up at Graddon Moor, near Chilla.

SG reported that there was to be a consultation over Coles Mill Viaduct shortly.

PHa - Coles Mill viaduct was originally used as part of the horse drawn railway so there was historical user evidence. It was essential that the Ruby Country Partnership and this meeting should speak with one voice to ensure horse riding was permitted over the whole of the Ruby Way.

RR agreed to meet with PHa to do a joint reply to the Coles Mill consultation for RCP/BHS/Ruby Riders and also other stretches where riding was under negotiation to ensure best practise was achieved.

SB – Meeth –needs input on this work to ensure horse riders will be included.

CI – This needs to go to the LAF. L. Wilmington (Head of Highways) is keen to implement multi-use. The policy needs putting on the ground.

PROW Team is fully backing multi-use.

## **8. Endurance GB SW pleasure ride.**

JL has organised a ride around the Wadland area on the 18<sup>th</sup> April, approximately 24 kms long. A team of riders is ready to go to the World Equestrian Games, the profits from this ride will go towards this. There is potential for this area becoming a competition ride which in turn would help local businesses.

#### **9. Thorndon X road crossing risk assessment**

SG – DCC planning some changes including signage, moving the bus shelter and cutting back hedges. Using current legislation guidelines, monitor for a year .

SG – CG currently working on a risk assessment process for all promoted routes.

#### **10. Promotional tabards**

SG – DCC awaiting new BHS logo to go on tabards.

#### **11. Any other business**

SG – Has had a very useful meeting with Adrian Bigg (BHS) who has created a very helpful website – [www.bhsaccesssouthwest.org.uk](http://www.bhsaccesssouthwest.org.uk).

PHa asked what progress had been made regarding the review in to multi-use on cycleways being undertaken by L. Wilmington. As the matter had been ongoing for almost 6 months it may be time to have an interim report.

**Next meeting** (to be confirmed) – Thurs 10<sup>th</sup> June 2010 at 1.30pm.  
Cookworthy Visitor Centre.