



LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

No 95 January 2019

28 January Extraordinary Charnwood Meeting open to all riders

It is important that yard owners are involved – these issues affect livelihoods!

To discuss:

Barrow Level Crossing Closure, Public Inquiry see P 6

Prestwold riding access ending: Start of major Garendon development

Suggestions for connected routes in Charnwood Regional Park

The meeting, at **Woodhouse Eaves Village Hall, Main Street, LE12 8RZ** will start at 7pm and take items in above order so people can arrive/leave for their local items. Refreshment break c.8.30pm, after which the Regional Park maps will be brought out to mark up. Finish 10pm.

Please email vicky.allen@freeuk.com if you plan to attend.

Membership Renewals now due – Renewal Form enclosed

Area Meeting Notes are enclosed for members riding in Leics & Rutland

2019 Rides Programme will be sent with March Newsletter but will be on our website as soon as it's finalised

Equestrian-specific First Aid training day

Leading to a nationally recognised qualification valid for 3 years

There are just 5 places left on this course which will be held on a Saturday in April or May, date & venue to be finalised. Entries taken on 1st come, 1st served basis - to Vicky as above.

Cost £50 per person. Hall hire and catering met by LRBA

Rutland Water Lagoons Ride, Sat 22 September

This Ride is very special as riders are not usually allowed on the foot/cycle path round the Water. It has only happened thanks to years of negotiation between Alex Pyper (our BHS County Access & Bridleways Officer) and Anglian Water. The walk/trot section between Egleton Bird Watching Centre and Sounding Bridge requires 3 stewards on the narrow section over the hill where horses, walkers and cyclists *could* have tangled with each other – but didn't.

There were 41 riders, 6 of whom joined for this last Ride of the season so are our first 2019 members. The weather was pleasant – the tail end of 2018's glorious summer. Everyone had been warned about the level crossing and the A6003 crossings, also stewarded, and about the gates and the cows. Despite which some riders moaned about the presence of gates and some left the venue remarking that they couldn't read a map. In case this was lack of skill rather than lack of spectacles a question has been put into the Renewal Form about possible map training. Please let us know if you think this would help you hack out more widely or find your way on Rides.

At the end no-one had got significantly injured by a gate, or lost, and there was praise for the route marking. Everyone had enjoyed using the 2 long stretches of BW as well as the novelty of the shared track to return 'home'.

This is the place to reiterate our thanks to venue providers, landowners who let us use 'private' routes – especially Rutland Water - and the many members and friends who help with route checking, admin, and stewarding on the day, not to mention our Ride Organisers for whom a Ride can dominate weeks of their 'real life'. Thank you, all of you, for giving so much pleasure to so many.

Hinckley International Rail/Freight Interchange

This is planned for a triangle of ground between the M69 and the Birmingham-Leicester rail line, **SE of Elmesthorpe and next to Burbage Common**. It's 'nationally important' so will go to the government for approval after local consultations by developers DB Symmetry. So we went to one of the October exhibitions. The direct effects - some good, some bad - for riders are:

- **Paths and roadside verges in the site**, apart from the new sidings area, will be open to walkers, cyclists, equestrians to encourage sustainable travel to work + recreation.
- **Burbage Common Lane (BCL)**. Part W of the railway unaffected. Rail bridge will be re-aligned over new sidings. BCL will be BW S of Langton Farm to N boundary of site.
- **A new BW round the site** (except for its NW boundary beside new sidings) in or beside the green planting screening the site, so a BW alternative to the central part of BCL.
- **BW U52 from Elmesthorpe** to the edge of the site will not be directly affected; riders will still get to Burbage Common. We've asked that the FP section of U52 from the re-aligned bridge to Smithy Lane be upgraded to BW to provide a better circuit related to the Common.
- **The all-vehicle entrance/exit** will be on to a new arm of the M69 Junction 2 rdbt. Slip roads towards Coventry will be added to the junction. The rdbt will have 7 on/off's instead of 4. Riders between Sapcote and the Common often use the rdbt rather than the diversion on BW V29 to the bridle bridge over the M69, so there needs to be an NMU-verge all round the rdbt.
- **Light-controlled crossings** are needed, we've said, across all 7 roads to assist Non-Motorised Users. DB Symmetry already sympathetic, but final decision rests with Highways England.
- **BW V29's western arm**, currently 1 field away from M69, will be moved so it's in new green planting beside M69. The arm on E side of M69 may be moved slightly, possibly to a better spot for crossing the Sapcote road, B4669.

DAYDREAMS OF LONG SADDLE-DAYS

Winter evenings lead to thoughts of summer rides. Days spent with your favourite horse. Perhaps exploring totally new areas. Our furniture and floor get covered with maps, sometimes assisted by apps. A cosy fug builds up as routes are plotted, reviewed, discarded and re-planned.

Someone else – Cycling UK in fact – is dreaming of a **1000-mile plus *bridleway* from Land's End to John o'Groats** plus a Dover to Land's End route and some other add-ons. They say that: *if and when implemented, cyclists and horse riders will be able to explore the length and breadth of Britain without being forced onto dangerous roads. The routes will piggyback the system of national hiking trails, such as the Pennine Way, and other rights of way.*

But, they point out, there are: *15 national trails, but only two – the Pennine Bridleway and South Downs Way – can be enjoyed from end to end by cyclists and horse riders.* So not too much chance of a quick piggy-back on the other 13, especially given that the link from the Ridgeway to the Pennine Bridleway – the Midshires Way that runs through Leics and opened in the early '90s – still has huge unresolved difficulties in Derbyshire, which only has c.9% of its PRow as BWs.

Cycling UK say: *right-to-roam legislation has opened up the countryside to ramblers... archaic access rules mean that until now there have been few benefits for off-road cyclists and equestrians.* Cycling UK's Paul Tuohy points out that *Britain's network of walking routes are envied around the world. In England and Wales only about 20% of that network is legally accessible for bikes and horses.* Not really fair in this age of anti-discrimination and equality. And walkers really *don't* understand how awful it is for us to be tossed into the roads when they so often just cross from a BW into a footpath.

In a spirit of what seems like blind optimism but which your editor would love to learn isn't, Cycling UK says that the Land's End to John o'Groats route will open next year – *although riders [I think they mean us] will at first have to switch to minor roads for a tenth of the distance.* What sneaky cut-throughs are those cyclists taking? Surely if there's 1000 miles off-road for them, there should be 1000 miles off-road for us?

But I quibble. Anything that gets ALL vulnerable road-users off our road network is to be welcomed. And we can all share, can't we? We have to admit that cyclists have far more 'clout' than riders and, if they're willing to carry us on their coat-tails (or luggage racks) then *Why not?*

Mark Weston, the BHS' Director of Access, backs the project, pointing to the road accident figures for riders and horses and saying that farmers could receive payments for opening up their land in a future Agriculture Bill. The proposals being made to Defra are that such payments should be made at higher rates for higher rights.

Anyway, if Cycling UK's plans work as they intend, here in the Midlands we're ideally placed to turn either north or south to fulfil our cold-weather dreams of long horsey days in sun and the saddle. Don't forget to pack a mack.

Level Crossing Public Inquiry

Network Rail's closure – on safety grounds – of the **Barrow-on-Soar** level crossing of BW I 20 will be the subject of a 4-day Public Inquiry starting 4 June in County Hall, Glenfield. Losing this crossing closes one of the best BW circuits in the county leaves a long BW as a dead-end. And we haven't been offered an alternative. LRBA has objected and will be appearing at the Inquiry. We have said we won't be calling more than 2 or 3 witnesses, but need to make sure we and other equestrian objectors are sending the same message to the Inquiry *and* to Network Rail, the County Council – and the rest.

Public Rights of Way are:

- Foot Paths (FPs)** – legally usable by the public on foot only (although higher rights may not have been recorded, in which case it would not be illegal to be using those rights).
- Bridle Paths/Ways, (BPs or BWs)** – legally usable on foot, horseback or on a bicycle as long as the cyclist gives way to walkers and riders as cyclists only use BWs by virtue of 1968 Countryside Act.
- Restricted Byways, (RBs)** – legally usable by the non-motorised public. So, in practice, a BW plus horse-drawn carriages.

Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) – legally usable by all the above plus motors

All the above are shown on the Definitive Map (DM) of Public Rights of Way

All routes on the DM are shown on OS maps, although there will be a delay for new or diverted routes.

The legal right to use does not guarantee that it is always practical to use any given route.

All routes are subject to unexpected events which may block them.

Many BOATs are unsuitable for motor traffic except after prolonged dry weather.

Cycle Paths are NOT shown on the Definitive Map. Neither are permissive FPs and BWs.

Permissive routes that are in a situation that guarantees their longevity can be shown on OS maps as permissive FPs or BWs. Cycle tracks can be shown on OS maps.

OS maps also show **Other Routes with Public Access (ORPAs)** which, generally speaking, are old roads that no longer have significant motor use and are often unsealed with a grassy surface. They can add significantly to the riding network. Responsibility for maintenance may lie with either the authority's Rights of Way or the Highways Dept. Make reports to RoW Dept unless you know better.

Found a Problem? Where and how to complain

Your guide for Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland
with some clues about neighbouring counties

The **EXACT** location of the problem will be needed, particularly for items like gates, badger holes, fallen trees etc, unless they're very close to a road. Public Rights of Way and highway systems may have online maps that give spot references, but the sure fire method is to give a grid reference – at least 6 figures preceded by the relevant 2 letters. See OS maps for instructions (but *do* count the stripes round edge of the map from zero to nine, not one to ten, or you'll be 100m out).

It also helps to know the names of the roads at each end of the Right of Way, and the nearest village(s).

Take care near county boundaries that you select the right county. Online systems invariably stop dead at the authority's boundary. OS maps will show any continuation.

If you want the number of the PRow (which helps the PRow officer) and the authority has an online map of its PRow, then once you've found the right path *and* the right spot, click on the line and the number *should* come up, perhaps with a spot reference.

NB non-L&R counties' systems are usually parish based so a path will have a different number as it goes into the next parish.

You should be given a reference number so you can chase up your complaint if it's not solved in a reasonable time. If the time gets 'unreasonable' contact our Networks Officer (vicky.allen@freeuk.com or 01509 215619) who can advise.

If you report an on-road equine-related incident to the Police, please also report it to the BHS via www/bhs.org.uk. The bottom of their Home page has a facility for reporting road accidents as well as incidents with dogs, cycles, wind farms etc. Also use: report@horseaccidents.org.uk or safety@bhs.org.uk or tel: 02472 840500

See our website www.bridlewayslrba.org.uk for reporting to neighbouring counties.

TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

- POLICE** www.leics.police.uk/reportonline Tel: 101 if non-urgent. Covers city, county and Rutland. Other counties: google X-shire Police.
- PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY:**
- Leicester City See box. Email customer.services@leicester.gov.uk OR 0116 454 1000
- Leicestershire www.leicestershire.gov.uk, then from home page select *Parks & Outdoor Activities*, then *Where to walk in Leicestershire* gets you to a page with the map on it from which you can get the path number. The process, on the same page, for reporting takes you to a completely useless map (Jan 2019). Reports via Email to highways.customerservices@leics.gov.uk OR tel: 0116 305 0001. [LCC are being pressed to improve their website.]
- Rutland From rutland.gov.uk there is an online map, found via Public Rights of Way then Definitive Map. Report via Email to: rightsofway@rutland.gov.uk OR tel: 01572 722577.
- RAILWAYS** **Level crossings.** At the crossing there will be a name or number for the crossing. Email crne@networkrail.co.uk marked for attention of John Hares, Level Crossings Manager. John Hares also covers Derbys, Lincs, Northants, Notts and Staffs around our borders.
- ROADS**
- Leicester City See box
- Leicestershire <https://leicestershire.gov.uk/popular-now/report-a-road-problem> OR email highways.customerservices@leics.gov.uk OR tel: 0116 305 0001
- Rutland <https://rutland.gov.uk/my-community/fixmystreet>

See our website www.bridlewayslrba.org.uk for reporting to neighbouring counties.

Leicester City

The City is a special case as, like many former County Boroughs (e g Nottingham and Derby) it did not have to create a Definitive Map (DM) of P_Ro_W in the 1950s. That is no longer the case but creating a DM from scratch is a long process with a final Legal Event Order needed to publicly record each P_Ro_W. The City now has an online map of the fully legal P_Ro_W. It does not yet show all the BWs inside the City but only the most contentious are not signposted on the ground. Because of the ongoing process, the City's P_Ro_Ws are not yet shown on OS maps. You can assume that county BWs continue into the City.

If you want to report a problem on a City BW follow the route below. Make the complaint even if a signposted BW is not on the map. Contact our Networks Officer if you need help.

Google: *Leicester City Council* From A-Z select *H*, then *Highways*, then *Report Issues with roads & pavements*. From list on left select *Public Rights of Way*; select **View web mapping system*; select *Highways*; select *Definitive Map of P_Ro_W*. Click on relevant green line and note description of where it goes from-to, and the ward name. Use the pin at the top of the map to get a 12-figure "custom location" for the problem; note this down.

Go back to previous page (*Highways*) – via Left arrow at top left of screen - and scroll down to Contact Us. You can email from the page, or you can phone 0116 454 1000.

To just check the mapping: from A-Z select *M*, then *Mapping Systems*, then from * above.

Public Inquiry re boundary BW

Keen-eyed map readers in the Vale of Belvoir will have noted an isolated bit of BW on the Leics' side of the Notts/Leics boundary between Redmile Lane (a tarmac road) and Granby Lane (part unsealed), by Jericho Covert. Riders had been travelling along the boundary between the parishes/counties "since forever" but only this short length managed to get onto the Definitive Map in the 1950s.

It involves various crossings from one side of the hedge and ditch to the other and in 2001/2 the ditch was cleared and dug out, removing several of the crossing points and so closing the BW. Local rider Mary Mackie got local riders to complete Evidence of Use Forms and, in 2003, submitted these to Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire County Councils.

In 2007 Nottinghamshire made 3 separate Orders for their parts of the route. One of these, from Granby Lane, has been put on the map without objection and is signposted. The other 2 Orders – for the sections either side of Leicestershire's isolated bit (G18a) – attracted 1 objection each.

So there will be a Public Inquiry to deal with the objections. For some reason Notts CC is taking a "neutral stance", so the applicant – Mary Mackie – has to present the case for the two bits of BW. As your Networks Officer was the BHS' Regional Access & Bridleways Officer at the time and supported Mary in the claim, she will be partnering Mary.

So expect a fun day (Not!) on Thursday 25 April at Bottesford Village Hall. Start 10am sharp.

Q: How did the tiny G18a get onto the DM but not the rest? A: Probably because the eagle-eyed Leics Footpaths Assn saw the magic "BW" where G18a now is, printed on the base map used by the Tribunal settling DM disputes c.1957. And the Leics Tribunal nodded it through. [NB: any Leics PRoW numbered with an "a" at the end (or "b", "c" etc.) means it was put onto the DM at the Tribunal stage. So they're ones we'd have lost if somebody hadn't been vigilant.]

Q: Will there be a through BW on the DM – and the OS - if the Inspector confirms the Notts' Orders? A: No, not until the other bit in Leics has been sorted out. But it is currently ridden.

Melton Local Plan & Melton Distributor Road

Our Vice-Chair, John Coleman, made an excellent submission to the Local Plan process on the need to provide for horse riders alongside walkers and cyclists. When Melton Borough approved the Plan in October the *Green Infrastructure* section included useful points that will support future comments on planning applications. In particular, Policy EN3 will be helpful:

"A strategic approach to the delivery, protection and enhancement of green infrastructure will be taken ... to deliver new assets where deficits have been identified..."

"New development proposals will be supported where they retain and enhance elements such as:

- *Access routes (public rights of way and permitted routes)"*

"New or enhanced green infrastructure corridors and assets should be as inclusive as possible and look to make provision for more than one of the following:..."

a) access to employment and leisure facilities and to the countryside

c) provide high quality bridleways, walking and cycling links between the corridor and towns and villages."

Well done, John, on getting BWs in as it proved crucial for our discussions in November with the County Council on the design for the North & East Melton Mowbray Distributor Road which joins the A606 to Nottingham with the A606 to Oakham. The LCC planners had obviously kept

a close eye on the developing Plan. The County Council is applying to itself (as the Highway Authority) for planning permission.

John was able to write welcoming *“the efforts being made to minimise the impact on PRoWs and to cater for the needs of Non-Motorised Users. We appreciate the preservation of Sawgate Road, Lag Lane and the extension [N-wards at Thorpe Arnold] via E25 as a continuous NMU route. We are particularly pleased to see E25 incorporated, rectifying a long-standing anomaly. [E25 is recorded as a FP but runs in an old road.] We also like the proposals to improve connectivity between BWs/byways at the S [Burton Lazars] end of the route. However*”

John then raised the *“Shared Footway/Cycleway”* alongside the road. *“Our submission to the preliminary consultation (Oct 2017) stated our expectation that this would be usable by horse riders....disappointed that its title still implies the exclusion of horses. Visitors to the drop-in events raised this matter ... We note that the Environmental Statement states in Para 2.11.2, “the inclusion of the 3.0m shared cycleway/footway provides NMU connectivity along the length of the route.” Para 15.1.2 states “... the term NMU is collectively used to describe pedestrians, equestrians and cyclists...” This seems to indicate that the shared footway/cycleway will be usable by horse riders and we would be pleased to receive confirmation...*

John then refers to Policy EN3 in the Local plan (see above) and notes the proposed shared path *“would have a 1.5m (minimum) verge at the back of the footway... seems designed with horses in mind. It would be desirable if ... wider, but essential that this minimum width be kept clear of signage and other clutter. Any horse riders could then keep clear of walkers and cyclists on the hard surfaced path. It would help if any signage could denote that the route is usable by all categories of NMU – walkers, cyclists and horse riders.*

He then commented that whilst horse riders would probably prefer using the Sawgate Rd/Lag Lane route up the E side of Melton to Melton Spinney Rd, the shared path would be their only option across the N of the town to Nottingham Rd.

John asked what, precisely, was intended for the three ‘equestrian crossings’ indicated on the plans, one described as an *“Uncontrolled Pegasus Crossing”* which he labelled as *surely a contradiction in terms* as a Pegasus is one of the suite of light-controlled crossings. *“..such crossings in the vicinity of roundabouts should be light controlled wherever possible.”*

He also took up the issue of **gates** on the E of Melton NMU/farm access route, asking for bridle gates beside what were likely to be large field gates for farm machinery.

And, given that, particularly E and S of Melton there is an array of old roads on which **carriage driving** is legal (including Sawgate Rd and Lag Lane) provision for driving was raised both at the Drop-In session – where it came as a bit of a shock to the planners - and in John’s letter: *“We would like to ensure that access for carriage drivers is maintained as far as possible on the new NMU route between roundabouts 3 and 6. ... assured that the crossings ... will not restrict the passage of carriages. The link across the A606, south of rdbt 6, to restricted byway D106 will be particularly valuable. [A short new BW is proposed to link D106 to Sawgate Rd. Whilst mentioning D106 we’d like to report that progress is slowly being made on improving the open-ability of the gates at both the A606 and Sandy Lane ends.]*

The road has funding and work may commence this year. For once something we won’t have to wait a lifetime for.

Thanks to John for his work on both the Local Plan and the road. Also to Ellen Senior and colleagues in LCC’s Rights of Way dept for the new NMU route and getting FP E25 back into the riding network - something that’s been on our Wish List for a long time.

28th Annual General Meeting

Monday 8 April 2019 7.00 for 7.30pm
at Hoby Village Hall, Main Street, Hoby LE14 3DT

followed by

Talk on the work of the *East Midlands Air Ambulance Service*

which rescues so many riders, by Sue Pendriss

The main business of the AGM will be to approve the Annual Report and Accounts for 2018, which will be circulated in the March *Newsletter*. Also to appoint LRBA's Chairman, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary, the Executive Committee and the Auditor for 2019.

The Association would welcome nominations to the Executive Committee. These can be made on the enclosed booking form or can be received as late as at the Meeting.

Tea/coffee will be available before the Meeting. A hot supper will be provided after the AGM free to members, £8 to non-members.

Choice of the following (supplied by the Blue Bell pub, Hoby)

Pork & Leek sausages with mash and mushy peas

Moroccan Tagine with rice and salad (V)

Supper choices must be booked on the enclosed form by Friday 29 March

Parking is either on road outside the Hall or in the nearby Blue Bell car park. Drinks can be purchased in the Blue Bell and brought into the Hall provided glasses are returned. Food is available at the pub (01664 434247) from 6pm if you prefer to eat before the meeting starts.

**OUR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY HAS RUN OUT OF STEAM AND WOULD
DEARLY LOVE TO HAND OVER TO SOMEONE NEW!!**

**DO YOU THINK YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO FILL THIS VITAL ROLE THAT
HELPS LRBA RUN SO SUCCESSFULLY?**

AS THE FIRST CONTACT FOR NEW MEMBERS YOU WILL NEED PEOPLE SKILLS
AND ALSO TO BE COMFORTABLE WITH EXCEL (to talk to the Treasurer) AND THE
SIMILAR MICROSOFT ACCESS (to talk to the Networks Officer) AND HAPPY TO
ATTEND 3 COMMITTEE MEETINGS A YEAR

**THERE WILL BE A LENGTHY HANDOVER PERIOD SO YOU WON'T BE
THROWN IN AT THE DEEP END.**

Email: liz.woolston@tiscali.co.uk for further details.