

Cumbria Bridleways Society Annual General Meeting Friday 14 Nov 2014 at Newbiggin Village Hall

Chair's Report

Thanks to everyone for coming and to all the Committee members for their support over the last year.

I would like to say something about why I joined CBS when I moved to Cumbria ten years ago. I didn't really know what the Society was about, but I hoped that by joining I would maybe find out about good places to ride, and maybe meet some like minded riders who were not all about competing.

To be honest, it took a while for me to really 'get into' CBS. I enjoyed the newsletters but it seemed like most things happened in the South of the County while I live in the far North-East.

It wasn't until I became Field Officer Co-ordinator that I began to realise all the good things that CBS had done over the years and was still doing.

Here is one example from this year of how well things can work. Lisa Hartley reported problems with some gates on a nearby Byway. Another track in the area was dangerously overgrown with low branches. When we sat down and looked at the map we realised that sorting these two problems would not only make those tracks possible to ride but would mean that Lisa and her friends would be able to reach other Bridleways which were fine but couldn't be accessed without going on a busy road. Cumbria County Council were keen to help as they get extra Brownie points for working with community groups. They offered to repair the gates if we would have a clearing party to trim the trees on the other track. They contacted the landowners for us and on the day a most helpful farmer came along with his chainsaw and offered to burn all the branches for us. So all those things came together and it's making those contacts that meant we could open up a whole area for riding with very little cost and effort.

So I think that those things I was looking for when I joined the Society are definitely there, but the more you get involved the more you will get out of it. And have some fun along the way!

Field Officer Co-ordinator Report 2014 Helen Kerry

Working Party

7 members carried out clearance of the BW at Greystoke Ghyll in January alongside the landowner who was most helpful on the day. Gay provided us with a superb soup and sandwich lunch which made a welcome end to the task.

Two further working parties were planned during the year but the clearing fairies beat us to it on both occasions! We are keen to encourage self-help where possible (using hand tools only) and will help you with clearing tasks if you would please keep us informed of any obstructions you are aware of.

As the two highway authorities in Cumbria face further cuts in 2015, our activities will help to keep routes clear and accessible.

Rights of Way Report

Despite the cost cuts and staff losses I think our Authorities are dealing well with our Rights of Way in difficult times but obviously deeper cuts are likely and the impact will be more severe.

The National Park Authority has just undergone a major redundancy and staff re shuffle so your rangers may have changed.

In the National Park the Go Lakes Initiative has been excellent at providing new routes and linking existing routes. Encouraging more sustainable travel on foot or by bike but actually also giving more access to riders.

There is very much an approach of working with communities and as our parishes engage with community planning and also the wider valley planning in the National Park, we must as riders speak up and encourage better and new access in our communities that is documented but more importantly will have been through a referendum and these are the documents planners will be looking at.

There may also be opportunity when planners are considering applications that communities may benefit from local improvements built into an application and we should look locally at whether some improvement to the Rights of Way network might be appropriate and could benefit riders.

As 2026 gets ever closer we have ongoing work to claim lost routes and we still have applications lodged with the authorities. It is taking years

but the National Park isn't doing too badly at all; quite a few of the claimed routes have got to the stage of having orders made. This means the National Park thinks there is enough evidence to support a claim. At this stage they put up signs at the start and end of the routes and wait for the objections to come in. A whole new phase begins then. If there are no objections, that is great, but if there are objections that are not withdrawn after discussion (often lengthy) with the ROW officers, the Secretary of State will be drawn in and so it goes on again. Eventually a public inquiry may have to be held. Because of this complicated procedure Cumbria County Council staff are only able to deal with about five claims a year.

As ever can I remind everyone to apply for passes for Gatescarth.

Continue to use and enjoy our Rights of Way network, report any problems and if we can help with new access in your area please come to us.

Carole Barr.

Treasurers Report Wendy Sawyer -see separate document.

Draft Minutes.

Present: Committee members Karen McLellan (Chair,) Wendy Sawyer (Treasurer,) Pamela Bonnick, Nicola Evans, Lisa Hartley, Tina Galloway, Gay Parkin; and about 25 members of the Society.

Apologies: Carole Barr, Helen and David Kerry, Jane Pape, Angela Martindale, Jenny Cowking

Minutes of 2013 AGM. These were adopted as a correct record.
Proposed by Wendy Sawyer, Seconded by Pamela Bonnick.

Matters arising. There were no matters arising.

Chairman's report. See above.

Treasurer's report. Wendy Sawyer explained the difficulties in achieving a complete handover from Tracey Harris. As soon as the handover is complete the end of year figures will be available on the website and will also be submitted to the next AGM with these Minutes. The most recent available figures are attached.

Membership. Lisa Hartley reported that there are currently 170 paid up members.

Rights of Way report (Carole Barr). See above

Field Officers Coordinator's report (Helen Kerry). See above.

Election of officers. Pamela Bonnick and Gay Parkin were due for re-election but were willing to stand. Pamela was proposed by Karen McClellan and seconded by Tina Galloway. Gay was proposed by Lulie Hothfield and seconded by Tina Galloway.

AOB.

- (1) Wendy Sawyer pointed out that the committee needs new members. As the newest member, she assured people that it is good fun. A minutes secretary would be particularly welcome.
- (2) Hilary Fell suggested that the AGM Minutes should be circulated to the membership and be placed on the website (which needs some updating). Karen McLellan agreed, and added that she would like to see committee Minutes put on the website when appropriate.

(3) Bridget Pickthall asked if anyone would be interested in volunteering for the Cumbria Local Access Forum. At present she is the only horseriding member.

The AGM closed at 8. 15 p.m.

Following the AGM William Redaway gave an entertaining talk about his travels with his horse Strider to raise funds for The Wormwood Scrubs Pony Centre and the Family Holiday Association. The proceeds from the meeting and the raffle were donated to these charities. Pamela Bonnick provided the refreshments.