



CUMBRIA BRIDLEWAYS SOCIETY

Minutes of the CBS 2012 Annual General Meeting held at Brantwood House Hotel, Stainton on Friday 2nd November 2012

Officers/Committee Members Present: Lady Hothfield (President), Tina Galloway (Chair), Tracey Harris (Treasurer), Karen McLellan (District Field Officer), Gay Parkin (BHS Officer), Lisa Hartley, Sarah Urwin (Minutes Secretary).

Apologies from Officers/Committee Members: Lord Inglewood (Vice President), Carole Barr (ROW Officer), Pamela Bonnick, Nicola Evans

Apologies from members: Barbara Dale, Charmain Piper, David Kerry, Margaret Baxter, Margaret Carter, Stephen Adams

Minutes of the previous AGM: Tina Galloway asked if everyone had received a copy of the minutes. The minutes were then proposed by Lisa Hartley and seconded by Karen McLellan

Matters Arising: There were no matters arising

Chair's Report, Tina Galloway: Tina thanked everyone for coming and gave us a review of the year. She apologised that the Autumn Newsletter was delayed and said the committee were struggling to get them out on time although we were hoping to address this. She said that we all felt the loss of Sue Gill with her warm and positive personality and ability to get things done. She thanked Tracey for her continuing efforts for the CBS despite major family and health problems and also Sarah and Richard Urwin for their help.

Tina said the Endmoor Tack Sale was a great success thanks to Tracey and Jane and there were two new stall holders this year. The Cartmel ride, in memory of Sue Gill, was held on a beautiful day and a huge amount of organisation by the BHS, NLBS and Cartmel Racecourse resulted in a very memorable occasion. Cartmel Racecourse have suggested that it might become a bi-annual event. The Spring Social was well attended with Gay persuading Rory Stewart to talk to us about his walk around Afghanistan. He answered questions afterwards, in an open and frank way.

This year Packs and Tracks combined with Countryfest held by the Westmorland Agricultural Society and the CBS occupied one corner of the showground, also providing much of the arena entertainment. The weather was good and there was a warm and friendly atmosphere. The future looks good for Packs and Tracks as the WAS want to continue the collaborative effort next year but will take over the organising, dealing directly with CBS members. This will reduce our workload and ensure things run smoothly. They have also invited CBS to join their Countryside Marquee at the Westmorland Show in September. Tina felt this could be a fruitful alliance.

Tina concluded by saying that the future for BW's and their societies looked challenging not least because the CCC Access Team has suffered major cuts and the ROW network has suffered pretty major damage as a result of the weather over the last couple of years. She hoped that all members would think of realistic proposals for projects that members of the society could help carry out in order to maintain our local network of BW's.

Treasurer's Report, Tracey Harris: Tracey talked us through this year's accounts which have been examined and certified as correct, copy attached. There was a brief discussion about the Lost Ways Resources and how this income can be spent.

Tracey reported on membership and said we now had 190 members on the database with 158 paying members. We had lost 39 members this year but gained 18 new members. She said there were membership forms available tonight for anyone who wished to join.

Tracey said that CBS members had run many successful and enjoyable events during the year with one of the main events for charity. The Surplus had reduced from £2,049.55 last year to £1,505.35 this year.

Tracey reminded members that subscriptions were now due and invited those currently paying by cheque or cash to set up a standing order instead. She said she had the forms with her and it made things easier for the Society.

Rights of Way Report, Carole Barr: *Karen read out the report as Carole was absent*

Throughout the year the Society has continued to be consulted on proposed changes to the Definitive Map and on balance we have had more gains than losses.

The Definitive Map Modification Order the Society submitted for a bridleway at Seattle near Cartmel resulted in a Public Inquiry due to objections. Society members were amongst those who gave evidence and we now await the Inspectors decision.

Later this month there will another Public Inquiry for part of the route near High Hampsfield Farm, also Cartmel area. Some of you may remember the work put in to successfully claim the Hampsfield bridleway a number of years ago.

There has been an increase in the number of applications for domestic wind turbines and this has caused great concern for riders where they will be situated close to roads and bridleways.

The BHS offers clear guidance on the siting of turbines. Unfortunately, the National Planning Policy Framework does not include anything about turbines being built near to rights of way. As a Society we had mixed feelings on the subject. Whilst recognising some horses just don't like being in close proximity to the turbines we also acknowledged as riders we have to cope with varied "spooks" our horses might not like. We will continue to quote the BHS guidelines when giving advice. (N.B. The BHS are currently re-writing the guidelines on wind turbines)

Back in March the Independent Forestry Panel visited Whinlatter visitor centre as part of their tour of the country following the Government proposal to sell off the forests. The importance of forests for recreational users was recognised in their report some months later.

The plan for a Coastal Trail around Britain continues to progress along Cumbria's coastline and it is now confirmed the path will head South following the initial pilot phase.

The "Go Lakes" project to deliver sustainable path projects will hopefully increase routes for riders along with the "Paths for Communities" fund for new bridleway initiatives.

However, it is still really important to highlight possible path upgrades that would make a real difference on a daily basis to rider's safety and enjoyment. If these can come from the community via the Parish Council with the support of landowners they are more likely to be looked at favourably. Many parishes are completing Parish Plans and from these some will establish Neighbourhood Plans. It is a good opportunity to say what improvements to the rights of way network you would like to see within your parishes. It is not a guarantee something will happen but it gives ideas some extra clout if they are identified and supported through these documents that are referenced by planning authorities.

Field Officer Coordinator's Report, Karen McLellan: Karen said that looking back at last year's report we have continued to build on good foundations. She read her report from her computer:-

A Bridlebridge at Last?: a lovely BW near Dalston has been inaccessible since at least 1974(!) since the ford crossing the river Roe was badly eroded. Redspearlands Footpath Group have long campaigned to get a Bridle bridge put up. We have joined forces with them and together with the BHS are writing letters of support from local riders which should help them secure funding for the bridge. They are also applying for a Paths for Communities grant to create a circular trail of Bridleways. Our work party volunteers may help put these new trails in place.

Clearing Party: we planned to get together in early September to tackle a BW near Pooley Bridge which was obstructed by vegetation and rocks from a fallen wall. Unlikely though it seems, the tidy-up was carried out the week before, by we think a group of National Park Volunteers! Shows how important communication between different groups is and this is something we continue to work on. We now have our eye on a BW in the Eden District which needs clearing.

Cycle Paths: we are now liaising with Sustrans and the Cyclists Touring Club to get the needs of horse riders taken into account when cycle routes are created. I have a meeting planned with the Sustrans representative. There are obvious problem areas, but it makes sense to work together for traffic-free routes.

Diversions: some of our Field Officers have been out checking proposed diversions to BWs, so we are able to feed back to the Council. We can also check that decisions made by the Council are actually taking place on the ground.

Gates!: after faffing around for years I finally got around to reporting a dreadful BW gate at How Mill in Hayton Parish to Andrew Nicholson of CCC. A perfectly good gate was tied to a perfectly good gatepost with string which meant that it could only be opened on foot with someone else holding your horse as it always fell over! and fastened with an awkward piece of chain which fell into the nettles every time! Within weeks it was changed to a lovely new gate which you can open without getting off. The moral of this tale is - don't put up with problem gates - I think there is a good chance of getting them fixed as it is relatively cheap and easy for the Council.

National Park: still on the subject of gates, one of our Field Officers has been in touch with her local National Park Ranger and he has sorted out some problem gates for her. This is an example of how building relationships with other organizations can really get things done. Often the needs of horse riders are not well understood so our advice makes all the difference.

Election of Officers: *Annual election of officers:* Tina Galloway (Chairperson), Tracey Harris (Treasurer) and Sarah Urwin (Minutes Secretary) were all proposed for re-election by Gay Parkin which was seconded by Jill Templeton.

3 yearly re-election of committee members: CM's elected in 2009 needed to stand down at this meeting but could be re-elected to the committee. Nicola Evans was proposed for re-election by Tina Galloway and this was seconded by Lulie Hothfield. According to the amendments agreed at last year's AGM we can now have up to 9 Committee members elected in addition to the Officers. *Election of new committee members:* Margaret Plank was proposed by Tina Galloway and this was seconded by Jill Templeton. Tina asked if anyone else would like to join the committee but there were no other proposals.

Any Other Business: Condition of Bridleways/Byways - There was a brief but animated discussion on the condition of various bridleways and byways including a byway at Selside which is in poor condition and not passable in poor weather conditions, despite being a major link to other routes. A member wanted to know what difference its status as a byway made. Karen responded by saying it wasn't always clear and that she was trying to build good relationships with the local authorities to help clarify things. Jean Gilbert said there was a similar problem with a byway near her. Helen Kerry said there was a hotline for CCC Highways Department and suggested members use it to report problems and put pressure on the authority to encourage them to take action. She also thought using the hotline might help to get things done more quickly. It was agreed that this is a very important subject which needs to be discussed in full and Sarah said she would include it on the agenda for discussion at the forthcoming CBS committee meeting.

Next CBS Newsletter - Lulie suggested that the Hotline telephone number be included in the next Newsletter and many members thought that guidance on what to do if you have a problem with a route should also be included in the Newsletter including local authority contact details. Whether it is best to report problems individually or through the CBS is an issue that needs addressing as the information members have been given in the past is contradictory.

Parishes not covered by Field Officers - Lulie asked if there was a list of parishes not covered by Field Officers and if so whether this could be included in the Newsletter too. Karen said it was sometimes confusing when looking at where parishes joined/overlapped as well as how they were named but said she would look into it.

Old CBS leaflets - Tina asked if members would take as many old leaflets as possible from the pile on the table as we wanted to have new ones printed in 2013. Several members commented that the old leaflets were now out of date.

Open Spaces Society - Tina asked if information about this could be included in the next newsletter to raise awareness about access to open fell. Sarah agreed to forward details to Tracey for inclusion.

All action points have been carried forward to the next committee meeting agenda. The meeting closed at 8.30pm and was followed by an illustrated talk by Sarah Urwin entitled Animals Helping People.