

## CycleWight Committee, 22 January 2025 Clatterford Rd & Zoom

Present: Claire Franklin (CF), Peter Dyer (PD), Helen Jones (HJ), Malcolm Ross (MR), Tim Thorne (TT), Mick Watts (MickW), Matt Whittaker (MW), George Wilks (GW), Neil Oliver (NO), Alex Lawson (AL).

### 1. The year ahead

Merstone CYCLEFEST received general support for repeating the event at Merstone on the Saturday prior to the Wayfarers Randonnee. So 3 May 2025.

The CycleWight AGM will be scheduled around same time as last year (11 October). Many arrived on bikes as it was not the dead of winter. The theme will be considered in the February committee meeting.

The RIVERFEST is on Saturday 10 May at Newport Quay.

The IW BIOSPHERE FESTIVAL is from 28 June to 6 July. We plan to arrange a Kiddical Mass ride in support (see below).

Priorities for year include West Wight Greenway (GW); Barriers (NO); LCWIPs (CF). TT said the list of barriers to be removed from cycle tracks has been submitted by the IWC to Island Roads. If any are declined citing safety issues we need to ask why.

There have been draft Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans for these further areas: Bay Area; Bembridge Brading and St Helens; Cowes Northwood and Gurnard; East Cowes and Whippingham. A public consultation on these by the IWC ended on 17 January. TT will write to ask how many responses there were. **\*\*\*TT\*\*\* Awaiting reply from IWC.**

We should ask members in each area to prioritise an item from their LCWIP. CF said the last Net Zero Transport Group meeting she attended wanted barrier removal. NO noted that removing the barrier in Northwood Park was least controversial as it would benefit the recent housing development.

PD suggested to repeat our cycle ride with councillors. CF added that the narrow Fairlee Road pavement (footway) shared walking & cycling route was part of the ride last time. So should we go to Fairlee Road with shovels ourselves to clear the verge back? MR pointed out that County Council elections may not take place this May, in which case parish & town council elections also will not take place for reasons of cost.

CF said safe space to ride is needed, and PD said the paths need to be maintained for safety. These things are connected and we need to focus councillors attention to this.

CF said many cyclist are woman & children, and asked if we know what proportion of our membership are female? It may not be simple to provide the answer as there are household memberships, but **\*\*\* MW will report \*\*\*** on male/female breakdown.

There has been a Road Safety Speed review carried out by the IWC. TT said that the council have identified places where lower speed limits are recommended but funding may not available to implement these as a limited amount was available to the IWC for road safety, believed to be just over £1million per year.

## 2. Island Roads / IWC

Asked about progress with the Think Bike signs, PD said that we are getting nowhere with this project or with other issues such as path maintenance. It appears that the IWC is currently in dispute with Island Roads. Certain safety matters have not been resolved for up to a year. PD has secured offers of sponsorship from Wight Fibre, Hursts Ironmongers and Medina Books for six more Think Bike signs. However the project is stuck in limbo. As noted in previous minutes we agreed to wait for the council officer to get agreement from Island Roads. However at some point we have to go public. Agreed that next week PD will contact IWC Road Safety officer then TT will contact Phil Jordan prior to contacting the IW Observer. Also TT will ask CycleWight membership if anyone has journalistic skills. **\*\*\*Action PD/TT\*\*\***

TT has received an email regarding work to eliminate tree root damage to track at Langbridge.

## 3. Kiddical Mass review and plans

The Kiddical Mass ride on 4 January took a route from Gunville to Newport Quay. The riders were mostly adults and the temperature was cold. Next time we need a couple of people on foot in the High Street to hand out flyers. MW said we should the revisit the communication and publicity timeline to reach press and social media. There is also a public health person we should contact. PD said it would be best to focus on Newport & Ryde in future.

Given that the Merstone Cyclefest is in May, the IW BIOSPHERE FESTIVAL which is in June is a good time for the next Kiddical Mass ride. A further ride in early to mid September could work. MR said the posters were excellent, but expensive to produce (£100+ for the 4 events). MW said a Sustainable Transport Campaign may provide advice and sponsorship. TT to investigate.

TT thinks the rides should be more inclusive, and suggested Isle Access could participate along Ryde Esplanade. MR suggested a start by Ryde golf course then along Spencer Road as this could be the route for the new Green Link.

## 4. Green Link

A December update to the IW Green Link has been made available to the committee. The Levelling Up Funds are allocated to a number of inter-related work packages, with some matched funding anticipated from Southern Water. IWC Highways have received quotes from Island Roads for Ryde and for Newport People First Zones as well as other packages. MR understands that Ryde Newport Active Travel infrastructure quotation has not been accepted.

Planning of the Isle of Wight Greenway is delayed by the Great Park Estate sale. A possible alternative route via Parkhurst Forest is under consideration. External consultants are supporting IWC Highways. Some landowner negotiations are at an advanced stage and a planning application is in preparation.

The committee noted there is some movement, but little concrete to show. A lot of information is not clear, especially on the Ryde to Newport route (Kite Hill, Fishbourne Lane etc). MW asked when we will see changes and if there any quick wins to be delivered? TT said the completion date is now at least 2026. MW said an extension to March 28 has been requested. CF asked for a map to show the packages where known and unknown. TT will follow this up. It does appear Phil Jordan still has transport portfolio **\*\*\*TT\*\*\***

MR suggested that the local councillors be made aware of the route problems in their areas, which in particular means the Wootton and the Shalfleet sections.

## 5. AOB

# PD said the Wroxall Shanklin cycle track was subject to surface water. The issue had been passed by Island Roads back to IWC and is on the Highways Safety & Improvement Register. Nothing had happened for 6 months, while another safety issue, removing the barriers on the Dodnor Creek bridge, was raised 1 year ago. Write to Phil Jordan on these issues \*\*\***Action PD/TT\*\*\***

# MR; 1. He has bills for website charges to be settled. 2. Do we hear about the CycleWight finances? TT noted that the accounts were prepared for the AGM and there is a CycleWight treasurer email to be used which he will provide to MR. **Complete**

# PD said it difficult to plan for the cycle paths when funding depends on charities and one-off grants. We should lobby MPs to structure funding for the National Cycle Network in a way similar to highways.

# AL noted that Government active travel funding was slashed in the budget from £308million to £100 million. This is according to Sustrans, which estimates that 'active travel' including walking, wheeling and cycling generated £36.5 billion for the economy in 2021.

# HJ said CycleWight should lobby IWC candidates if there is an election in May. Who will announce the election and when? MR said the government Minister for Local Government will decide, and we have got to know by mid February. We should ask what support candidates promise to cycling, while NO added we should ask if they support their LCWIPs.

# Re the Rookley A37 Bridleway GW asked if any progress update? Negative – ongoing.

# Re St Mary's Hospital Estates meeting, PD asked if any update? Nothing heard – ongoing.

# Arising from this meeting as reported in the last minutes, HJ asked if an introduction could be provided to Professor Scarlett McNally, at Eastbourne who authored the paper on exercise. TT will pass to his cycle campaigning contact in the area. **Complete**

**Next Meeting:** February 2025