

## **CycleWight Committee, 22 November 2023 Clatterford Rd & Zoom**

Present: Helen Jones (HJ), Julie Jones-Evans (JJE), Malcolm Ross (MR), Tim Thorne (TT), Mick Watts (MickW), Matt Whitaker (MattW), George Wilks (GW), Alex Lawson (AL). Apologies: Peter Dyer (PD), Claire Franklin (CF) Alan Bennett (AB)

### **1. Government Levelling Up funds.**

On Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November the office of Bob Seely MP announced the award of a £13.6 million round three Levelling Up Fund to the island. This is for a “Green Link” corridor between Ryde and Yarmouth to encourage travel by bus, bike or on foot, a 13 mile Newport to Yarmouth West Wight Greenway and Gunville Greenway to promote cycling and walking, and a project to improve cycling routes in and around Newport.

The news has been published in the media. The committee discussed with Cllr Julie Jones-Evans. It was noted that levelling up funding had been received by the Island for earlier projects in East Cowes and in Ryde. The current award however was bid for some time ago then declined. It will need to be reviewed by those councillors and officers who are now in post, to determine what is now deliverable. Bob Seely is aware that the current problems on the Newport to Sandown Cycle Track could benefit from a possible re-purposing of some funds.

HJ asked about the timeline? JJE said the funds will need to be spent in the 2 years until 2026. TT said the council would need to employ additional people or companies with some prior knowledge of the issues and the locality. However at least landowners would now be aware of the importance to the community, and some advance planning has identified unbuilt gaps for a through route. The IWC also has ownership of certain land which will form part of cycle network in Newport. MR said that the West Wight Greenway is off-road but the Newport – Ryde part of the corridor involves sections on-highway. In London there are already many low-traffic neighbourhoods and 20mph limits in place.

MattW asked what CycleWight could do to assist the council? TT asked if the bid was in the public domain? JJE suggested that we request a copy from the council which we would be able to review. We can request a meeting, which JJE would wish to attend. We should congratulate the lead councillors and officers who have secured the projects.

MattW said that once there is detail to go on that CycleWight has a meeting to determine interventions needed to secure the viable aims which we see as priorities. JJE said that CycleWight has local background and knowledge to contribute. She said there should be a round table meeting of parties such as CLA & NFU.

### **2. Kiddical Mass Ride**

HJ said Kiddical Mass Rides are held widely elsewhere, and are encouraged by Cycling UK. Families tend to participate, they are free rides and they normally take place at weekends and through town centres. They are popular in London where she has a friend who is involved and who could provide us with help. Southampton has at least one per month. MattW said he is excited by the idea but cannot lead. TT likes the idea and will approach Alex Broome who runs the Sports Development Unit and has contacts with schools. Various routes were considered and JJE suggested starting at Carisbrooke. So Castle to Quay was agreed, which is all downhill. Check with English Heritage, and that car parking is possible. A date in spring such as 16 or 17 March would be desirable JJE pointed out that 3 June is World Bicycle Day and 26 September is Car Free Day. These two dates were considered to be future dates if the March event was successful

### 3. Cycle Routes: Brading, Rookley,

Darrel Clarke the IWC Rights of Way manager met with CycleWight members 21<sup>st</sup> Nov to discuss the options at Brading Station. Also present was Ken Fry of Mayer Brown who has provided a feasibility study with respect to the footpath B69 to the south of the station to join the highway at Yarbridge. A previous report dealt with the footpath B1 to the north of the station to Quay Lane.

For the section involving B69 the current exit by Yarbridge is not safe and an exit towards Marshcombe Shute is better. This would need to be put to the RSPB whose land is involved, and they might be in opposition. However a route along the edge or involving a boardwalk might be considered and a bird hide could be proposed. CycleWight should approach the RSPB.

For the section from Quay Lane to the level crossing at Brading Station it was felt that this could be widened and surfaced. However AL said that a route which connected on the east side of the station should be pursued, as this would give South Western Railway a safety bonus and would benefit the Brading community most. It was decided to contact Brading Town Council to find their views and ask if they have been in contact with South Western Railways. **\*\*\*TT/AL\*\*\***

The meeting also considered the upgrade to Rookley to cycle track bridleway A37. Should Mayer Brown be asked to carry out a survey? This is not obligatory as RoW consider the project is straightforward. TT is waiting for a response from Arreton & Rookley parish councils if they approve and will offer financial backing. TT added that RoW are now located with Roads and Infrastructure for IWC.

### 4. Path at Fort Victoria

The Fort Victoria coastal path has been signed by Right of Way as a "Share with Care" multi-use path but is designated as footpath. Part is wide and can be readily shared but the Monks Lane end is narrow and objections from walkers have been received by RoW. However there is a big gain over the Halletts Shute highway alternative. We are seeking to secure a change of use via Definitive Map Modification Orders. The documentation is daunting to complete so there will be huge amount of work to complete the required outcome. We will need local CycleWight members to pursue this. To be followed up.

### 5. AOB

# Randonnee 2024 weekend: Agreed to consider an event to celebrate opening of sections of the West Wight Way such as that at Freshwater. The event in May at Merstone was successful and the bike shops would be keen to participate again. **Now confirmed by Natural Enterprise.**

# The Active Travel Cafe is an online forum which runs on Zoom at 5pm on Tuesdays. Will Ainslie recommends: <https://activetravelcafe.org.uk/> It can be browsed to look at issues raised previously and there is really interesting stuff to be found.

# JJE suggested that CycleWight offer a presentation to Newport and Carisbrooke Parish Council, along the lines of the one delivered recently to Newport Business Association by TT & GW (possible date 4 December).

# The CycleWight website fee of £60 has been paid.

**Next Meeting :** December date TBA.