



HANTS & WEST SUSSEX BORDERS BRIDLEWAYS GROUP

Contact 02392 455685

NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2007

MONUMENT LANE BRIDLEWAY WESTBOURNE

At last the drainage problems have been dealt with on this bridleway thanks to the fund-raising efforts of local members of the bridleways group. The total cost of the work was £2,300. We had to obtain permission from South Downs Joint Board who are responsible for the upkeep of the bridleways in the area before we were able to arrange for the much needed work to be carried out. For many years now horses and walkers have been wading through deep mud during the winter – or avoiding the route – but this bridleway should now be usable all year round without long wellies!!!

Very many thanks to those of you who raised funds which will benefit not only yourselves but many other riders and users of the bridleway.

PORTSDOWN HILL BRIDLEWAY CLAIM

The decision not to add a bridleway across Portchester Common (a section of Portsdown Hill at the top of Skew Lane) made by Hampshire County Council is being challenged and may well go to Public Enquiry as is the decision by Fareham Borough Council to continue to deny the right to ride horses on this piece of Registered Common Land.

Portsmouth City Council were due to make a decision regarding the bridleway claim on the remaining part of the hill on the 16th April. We attended the Committee Meeting to make a deputation on behalf of horse riders wishing to use the hill. The Chairman said he found this a very difficult matter and wished not to proceed without the attendance of the Ward Councillors affected by the claim, none of which were present at the meeting. Presumably this would be Cosham Wymering and Paulsgrove. A meeting was to be arranged between all parties concerned together with the Councillor representatives. We immediately contacted Portsmouth City Council with a number of available dates. However they have preferred

to wait until after the local elections before a meeting is arranged. We hope to hear from them very soon so that this matter can be taken forward.

COME AND JOIN US

Don't forget that some of the Working Group are at the Westbourne Social Club River Street Westbourne nr Rowlands Castle on the **FIRST TUESDAY** of every **MONTH** to help you with bridleway problems and talk about things in general. Please come and join us for a chat – we look forward to seeing you



This is made of driftwood – clever or what!!!

WHICHERS GATE ROAD BRIDLEWAY ROWLANDS CASTLE

It feels like tempting fate to say that we have been told that work will actually commence during the **SECOND WEEK IN JUNE** which is apparently the soonest the contractor will be available. After major fundraising HCC are still reporting a shortfall in finances due to the cost of materials being increased – due to the time it has taken them to get on with the project!!! We have therefore written again to the Veolia Trust (formerly Onyx – this has taken so long even the company have changed their name!!!) asking

their Trustees to consider increasing their funding by a further £4000. We will know the outcome of this request at the end of May. We are also trying hard to improve safety for riders using the Whichers Gate Road to access the bridleway. We have asked for dayglo bollards to mark the bridleway entrance and will be adding a mirror opposite the bridleway to assist riders to see approaching traffic without the need to enter the carriageway. We are informed that Hampshire Highways require the local Parish Council to support us in our request for safety improvements and to this end we have written to the Rowlands Castle Parish Council and are currently awaiting their reply.

REDUCING SPEED LIMITS

There have been some initiatives lately to try and slow the traffic to enable non-motorised users to get to the rights of way more safely. It is a known fact that most fatalities happen on rural roads and yet the national speed limit remains at 60 mph. Hampshire County Council are apparently reviewing the speed limits in villages but at the request of the Parish Councils The Village 30 Scheme. Hampshire Highways also have in mind a review of the A and B roads in the county. Currently there appears to be no scheme in Hampshire to consider the other lanes which are at present de-restricted. HCC seem of the opinion that people want to travel as quickly as possible and do not want the speed lowered in the country lanes. Perhaps we need to try and influence our local Councillors if, in fact, most of us would be prepared to travel more slowly to keep non-motorised users safe. There is a website Petition calling for speed restriction <http://petitions.pm.gov.uk/countrylanes/> should anyone who has not done so care to sign up. If we want to ride out safely we must all try and add our weight to any initiative offered. We will never get completely off road riding unless we can afford transport and pay for Toll Riding Schemes therefore slowing the traffic and continuing to use the roads is the only option.

For those riders who are trying to get speeds reduced in Hampshire lanes there is a link on the HCC website <http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-docs/061218-cabine-R1212110852.html> <http://www.hants.gov.uk/decisions/decisions-docs/061218-cabine-R1222094714.html> which gives a recognition by the Cabinet that speed is a problem and shows a desire to take some action. Local Parish Councillors and Ward Councillors are probably the best people to approach and get on side to make the Highways

Department listen.

PLEASURE RIDE 2007 Sunday 24th June

Once again we are holding a Pleasure Ride to raise some funds for the Group. A poster is included with this Newsletter which please put in your yard or local tack shop or feed merchants so that we get as many entries as possible. Entry forms can be downloaded from our website www.wsbways.co.uk .

CONTACT NUMBERS

We understand that Barry Lockyear the Rights of Way Officer for East Hants is currently off sick and the contact for problems in that area is his manager Paul Thomson on 02392 595040 This covers Havant Horndean Petersfield up to Bentworth Alresford West Meon Meonstoke Hambledon Denmead

For South Hants it is Liz Giles (again off sick) so Kim Elderton is contact based at Royal Victoria Country Park on 02380 455157. This covers Gosport Bursledon Ampfield Twyford Exton Soberton Wickham area

For the South Downs Western Area it is Ian McConnell based at the Weald & Downland Museum on 01243 811533

Below the Downs is West Sussex County Council at County Hall Chichester on 01243 777911

Please report any problems on the public rights of way to help ensure that our bridleways are kept open. Contact us if you need help with this

ACCIDENT/NEAR MISS FORM

There seems to be no reliable recording method of horse related accidents on the road which gives evidence to use when trying to negotiate speed reductions/safe lanes etc., The police do not record such incidents and the BHS figures seem difficult to obtain. Perhaps a more local picture would be useful and we are therefore considering something on our website and perhaps also a paper form to enable us to get some sort of picture for Hampshire/West Sussex. It is important to report and publicise any accidents or near misses with your horses as this will help inform and educate both the authorities and the motorists who may not be aware of the dangers and distress involved in an accident with a horse on the road. If we all try and work together for the common good we will achieve results in the long run

HAPPY HACKING