



# HANTS & WEST SUSSEX BORDERS BRIDLEWAYS GROUP

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY

[WWW.WSBWAYS.CO.UK](http://WWW.WSBWAYS.CO.UK)

## WINTER NEWSLETTER

Since the last Newsletter it has been an ongoing uphill struggle to get anything actually done on the ground towards the projects for which funds have been raised.

### **The Whichers Gate Road bridleway**

has still not been started even though we gave all the necessary information to the Rights of Way Officer for Hampshire as far back as March. Some of the delay is down to 'official red tape' but this alone cannot account for such a long delay. There was a promise by the Manager of the department that this work would be carried out before the winter – but still nothing. We are continuing to put pressure on the County Council to do this work without further excuses. Our concern is that we will lose the £12,000 Onyx funding which will be handed over on completion of the work. It is our intention as part of the project to instal a mirror opposite the bridleway on private land, for which we have permission, to assist users of the bridleway when coming out into the traffic.

There has been a campaign by the local primary school for a reduction in the speed limit on the Whichers Gate Road and surrounding area and riders joined in a protest which was reported in the press and on tv. We are soon to present a Petition to the Hampshire County Council Member for the Environment and we have asked that Havant Borough Council also support us in pressing Hampshire Council and Police to take action in this area.

### **Monument Lane/Park Lane**

Again nothing has been done to date as the South Downs Conservation Board (now calling themselves The Joint Board) who have delegated responsibility

### **Draft BOAT Order on Monument Lane**

TELEPHONE: 02392 455685

for the statutory maintenance of this bridleway, having agreed to do the necessary drainage work taking into account the £1000 contribution offered, then decided not to proceed because of the outstanding claim for a Byway Open to All Traffic on this route. This type of upgrade depends mostly on historic evidence and the condition of the surface has no bearing on the decision of the status of any route. However this was the excuse used not to carry out the work.

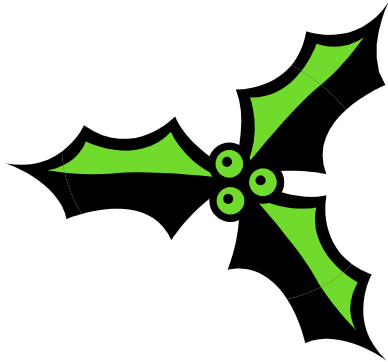
After a great deal of negotiation with the Board – and with further fundraising – we have now got permission to carry out this work in our own right and the Group will bear the whole of the cost – likely to be in the region of £1800/2000. We feel we may be caught in some political game between the Board and West Sussex County Council which is truly unfair to the bridleway users – and in particular to those who worked so hard to raise funds. The Board have said that they have no funds for surface work for at least two years! We shall see!!



**Working Group**

e-mail: [sue.montila@ntlworld.com](mailto:sue.montila@ntlworld.com)

Some members may recall that when the claim was first lodged for an upgrade of the Park Slip and subsequently Monument Lane from bridleway status our Bridleways Group decided to join the Green Lanes Environmental Action Group. This has now paid dividends as we have recently had a meeting of all landowners and residents affected by this proposed change of use together with an expert in these matters who has come to us through Gleam. We now have an agreed plan of action which we hope will result in this old historic lane being protected from the damage of motorised vehicles.



The Inspector has agreed the proposed **Crossing of the A32 near Warnford** with some further amendments to join up the South Downs Way. HCC propose to instal a solar powered horse warning sign as part of their attempt to make this crossing safe. However there will be no speed restriction on this road which most riders feel would be appropriate for a new road crossing of a National Long Distance Bridleway.

### **Portsdown Hill Bridleway Claim**

This saga rolls on.

Fareham Borough Council are refusing to open Portchester Common for riders and are refusing to let us see a copy of their Counsel's Opinion on which their refusal is based. The MOD were asked if they would dedicate the part of the bridleway which has been claimed on their land, below the fort. As they have no use for the land it is leased by them to Portsmouth City Council without payment and as the Ranger for PCC feels a bridleway would be inappropriate and may damage the flora and fauna, the MOD feel they should refuse our request. We are now waiting for the Report of the Officer who has been investigating this claim on behalf of Portsmouth City Council.

After speaking with members who are currently involved in projects it has been decided to form a Working Group to meet possibly every six weeks or whenever necessary one afternoon at someone's house to gather ideas and move things forward and take responsibility for things as and when they arise.

The first of these meetings will take place early in January.

It is recognised that the open meetings may have been missed but we had used the same format for five years and it felt in need of change.

**THEREFORE MEMBERS OF THE WORKING GROUP WILL BE IN THE WESTBOURNE SOCIAL CLUB RIVER STREET WESTBOURNE BETWEEN 8PM AND 9.30PM ON THE FIRST TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH – STARTING IN FEBRUARY 2007.**

This will give everyone an opportunity to come and discuss their particular bridleway issues and get updates on progress in a more individual and relaxed way than at a formal open meeting.



**We look forward to seeing you soon and in the meantime have a peaceful Christmas and a very Happy New Year**