

Minutes of Sustrans Ranger Meeting held Monday 8th October 2007 at The Lansdown, Clifton

Actions in red.

1) Welcome especially to new rangers, Introductions, Apologies, Resignations.

Present: Peter Hobbs (chair), Martin McDonnell, Jane Chapman, Philippe Cazalis, Alan Morris, Will Keogh, David Neale, Jon Watts, Rich Sanders, Myles Cutler.

- Welcome to new Ranger Jon Watts. We also look forward to welcoming Will Gillett.
- Apologies received from Sarah Badman, Mark Parrot, Ross Harley, Robin Lapworth, David Jupe, Colin Ling, Angela and Mike Blott, Emma Leach, Polly Stubley, Chris Darney, Mark Parry (S Glos), Andy Whitehead and Francis Mann (BCC).
- Resignation: Eddie Neave.

2) Route allocations to new Rangers.

- John Watt has been allocated the south end of M5 Avon Bridge to Portishead route 33. **David Neale** has some work to pass on to him regarding a signing schedule for this route.
- Will G has been allocated to, and Jane has now switched to, join Adam and David J on the Hollywood Lane / Farm Lane / Severn Beach / Bridge section of route 4.
- Colin has moved to join Myles and Mark on Aust / Elberton / Severn Bridge routes.

3) Reports from Rangers – progress, problems, plans, on your section of route.

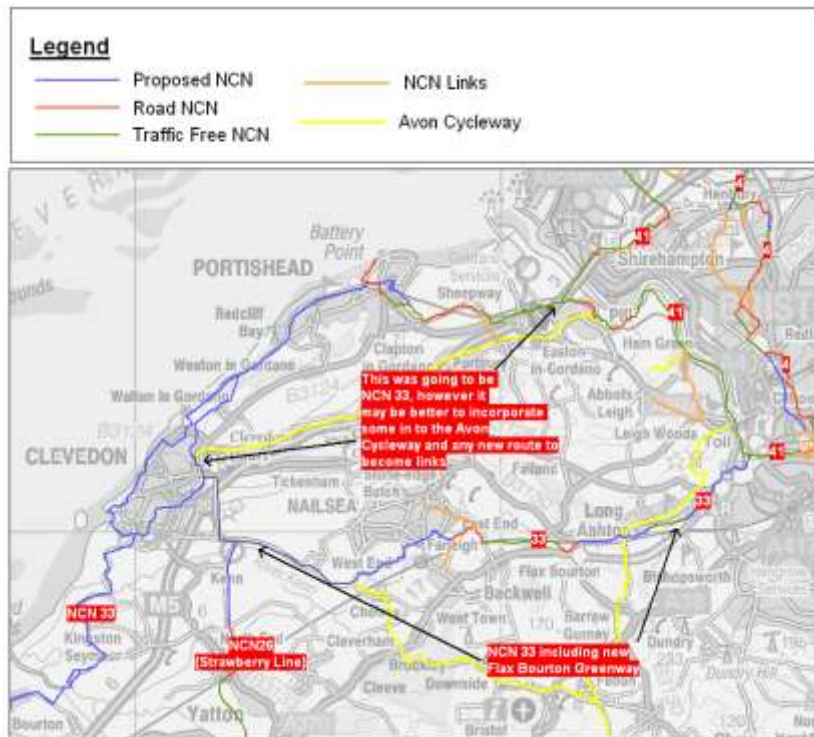
- Peter: No signs in Blaise Estate, although the new surface is excellent. Signing within the estate is precluded by the terms of Heritage Lottery funding (but when it is all received we will try again!), but there are now signs “To Blaise Estate” and “To the NCN” either end of the estate. The problem is the potential to take the wrong turn at the old mill. Peter has signed the link from Coombe Lane to the Portway via Bellbarn Rd and Sea Mills Lane (**Rich** to add to GIS)
- Ross Harley (in absentia): Currently a nasty junction at Greystoke Av to Falcondale Road. Hopefully the planned installation of a new roundabout will rectify this. Also BCC work needs doing on the vegetation on pavement section of A4018 south of Dragonswell Rd.
- Martin (RR10. 13.5 miles from Avonmouth Bridge to Olveston). Peter and Martin signed the route in April and Martin has been maintaining the signing since (including a new road). A bad area around a subway that is blocked by boulders and has no dropped kerb for cyclists. (South Glos policy apparently is to remove all access barriers). New Thermoplastic signing in Lawrence Weston Greenway a great success (more later), however regular maintenance needs doing to prevent overgrowth of greenery. Potential for a workday here

(more later). Peculiar “Cyclists Dismount” sign at Lawrence Weston over bridge crossing the M5. InterRoute are currently investigating replacing this damaged bridge with facilities for cycling and horse riding. Martin has also semi-adopted the Portway as it is his route to Sustrans office, so helping Robin. BCC maintenance work still needs doing at Sea Mills viaduct.

- Jane: Current NCN 33 to Portishead will need to be changed as 33 is to incorporate the Flax Bourton Greenway. Hence current NCN 33 through Clevedon, Portishead and to Avonmouth bridge may become Avon Cycleway with NCN links. North Somerset Cycling Officer Jonathan Gall needs to make a decision here! Jane has now passed this on to Jon and Jose. Jane inspected her new allocation on Sunday. The Dyer’s Common tarmac section is (amazingly) not too bad at present. The access barriers made from skips full of manure is overgrown. Section around Curry’s warehouse still very rough – responsibility of Gazeley (developer). Where NCN4 and NCN41 split (SW of Severn Beach) a sign needs replacing on timber post **Action Will K, Polly, Nayavira**. There were many old and non-regulation signs in the Severn Bridge area (numbers with no arrows must not be used!), Jane has removed several of them. Discussion about the B4461 link route to Aust (Manor Farm to Redhill section). Is it suitable? It’s certainly well used. How can we get South Glos to put in a safe cycling facility?
- Mike and Angela have signed the alternative (but on-road) Route 4 via Pilning Station to provide a more direct route to Severn Bridge and to avoid rough section around Curry’s. S Glos signs awaited at each end.
- Philippe: (Ashton - Pill Path NCN41). David Neale wrote a list of recommendations to be done prior to Bristol’s Biggest Bike Ride (BBBR). Some (very red looking) limestone has been used to infill some of the deep puddles on the path, but the work is not complete. David highlighted the dangers of the drop to the river- temporary yellow tape was provided for BBBR, but suggested about 500m of fencing is required here. Concerns were raised over the narrowness of sections of the route and a few tight corners. This is Bristol City Council’s (BCC) responsibility, but how can we effect action? Suggest some of Bristol’s “Share the path” signs should be put up on the path in short term to encourage careful cycling. Action: **Philippe** to suggest to Andy or Francis.
- Alan (City centre to Reedley Road): Nothing new, some signing occasionally obscured by temporary/event signing.
- Will was congratulated for completion of Thermoplastic signing! It looks as if we could save considerable sums by applying the Thermoplastic signs ourselves (e.g. £500 instead of £800). Sustrans to invest in gas and burner? (Action **Jane** when next batch of signs needed).
- David N: 1) Avonmouth Bridge route not being maintained by InterRoute - covered in debris and leaves. 2) Nasty hump over the expansion hinge of the Avonmouth Bridge 3) NCN41 south of Avonmouth bridge - there’s a lot of offensive Graffiti on the Docks Railway bridge. The bridge is owned by the Bristol Port Company - **David N** to investigate the possibility of replacing graffiti with artwork by UWE College of Art or St Katherine’s school (citing

example of artwork in concrete underpasses under the Brunel Way near Bower Ashton).

- Jon: Has ridden his new route. Huge puddles on Mash Lane. Jane to pass on contact details for Jonathan Gall for Jon to address Jonathan re these problems. NCN33 peters out in Portishead. As previously mentioned, the route was supposed to continue to Clevedon, but is likely to be redirected because of the Flax Bourton Greenway. *NEW- Rich talked to Rupert Crosbee (regional route negotiator) who suggests that the following is likely:*



- Rich: Recently went out to design a signing schedule from Queen Square to Brunel Open Space (between Cumberland Basin flyover and Ashton Pill Path) with Francis Mann from BCC. This will hopefully be in place by Christmas, and looks like our first opportunity to incorporate NCN signing into the Legible Cities signs (the new navy blue signing that has gone up around Bristol and other cities).
- Myles: Has signed the routes around Aust / underpass and Severn Bridge and discovered many ancient and random signs on his patch. Noticed a possible confusion over the cycle provisions near Severn Bridge. Jane to ask Mark Parry for the new signing schedule for this area. Myles was misled by the “Crossed out” National Cycle Network sign, which is food for thought for Jane. Discussion about the possible options for crossing Severn Bridge and the importance of keeping the South side passable for cyclists.

4) New routes opened.

- Strawberry Line from Yatton to Cheddar (NCN26).
- Flax Bourton Greenway (2km of new NCN between Flax Bourton and Long Ashton).
- Discussion of new “Mobius Bridge” (Google it!) to Castle Park and BCC plan for floating cycling and walking routes from Castle Park to Temple Gate.

5) Relevant Feedback from Bristol and South Gloucestershire Cycling Fora. (Martin).

- South Glos: Nothing new (the usual talk about routes for Rolls Royce and British Aerospace employees). Praise for the excellent S. Glos cycle forum website and table of issues and actions.
- Bristol: Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP). Bristol plan to follow the excellent lead of South Glos and their forum website. BCC report excellent progress and an increase in cycle route usage. Perhaps their targets are not high enough? If people would like a copy of the minutes contact Martin (also on websites?).

6) Feedback from Liaison Ranger conference in Oxford (Jane)

- Reiteration of the need for Signing Rides and Work Days
- 2008 is the Sustrans Year of the Child
- Lots of Connect 2 stuff

7) Connect2 (Jane)

- Very important that **all Rangers** know what Connect 2 actually is!
- Effectively, it's a competition called Living Landmarks to decide where £50m of Big Lottery money will go.
- Sustrans “Connect 2” project is in the running against entries from Eden, Sherwood Forest, The Science Museum, Black Country Urban Park and Somerset Waterways.
- It will be decided by a vote following a TV show in early December
- We're up against some big names, but with 79 projects (and 20 reserves) - Connect 2 has by far the greatest nationwide impact.
- Our local schemes are the Ashton link (from CREATE, over the old MegaBowl site, to Ashton Park School, Bower Ashton college and Ashton Court, then a new link alongside the Long Ashton bypass, through Long Ashton then on to the Flax Bourton Greenway); The Bath Two Tunnels (head south from Bath through 2 tunnels, one of which is a mile long!, getting you to the south of Bath with NO HILLS!), and a reserve scheme in Radstock. These will all be fantastic schemes for walking and cycling near you and the other projects will have further impact all over the country.
- We need votes in order to win! Register yourself to the text number **NOW** and tell everyone you know (and those you don't!) to do the same.

- Text **Connect2** to **80010** now to register- near the vote you'll get a text telling you how to vote.
- Get everyone to do this! ALL your friends and family!
- **Everyone** !! (Got the idea?)

8) Work days: Report on Environment Agency day (Martin). Future Grant Thornton day.

- Half of the Chocolate Path (NCN41) was cleared in a day, this seems to have provided the impetus for SITA to do the rest! The Chocolate Path is generally looking good - the fairly recent dog waste bins are doing a much needed job (Rich's pun!).
- Grant Thornton (Bristol firm of accountants) have offered to do a work day. Contact is Liz Saunderson. The Lawrence Weston Greenway is a highly suitable location. Martin is seeking permission from BCC. Peter trying to liaise with Liz Saunderson.
- Volunteers for this day include David N, Jane, Philippe (Weds/Fri), Martin, Jon (Mon, Tue, Fri). **Any other volunteers please let Peter know.**
- Equipment is an issue. David N and John Bishop have some clearing equipment. BTCV hire out equipment, Sutrans kit used on the Flax Bourton Greenway is still in the container in Backwell.
- Now is appropriate time as October to March avoids nesting birds.

9) Sustrans website maps – NCN route numbers (Chris / Rich)

- Working once more (hold cursor on the route for pop-up number), however the website mapping is under review and needs to enable printing.

10) Mapping our patch, and our own webpage on Ranger Net? (Martin).

- Many thanks to Martin for providing digital mapping for the meeting!
- Google Maps/Earth satellite imaging useful to map routes and locate issues.
- Google FREE to anyone with an internet connection.
- Routes from Martin's MemoryMap (or GIS) can be overlaid on Google mapping.
- What can we do to create a useful database of ranger issues?
- Unanimous decision that a "Bristol" section of RangerNet would be very useful.
- **Martin** to develop this.

11) "Signs of Spring" – April 08. (Jane).

- April will be an entire signing MONTH rather than the usual week- so no excuses for missing it!
- Top priority nationally is still signing and sign maintenance – cyclists still getting lost!
- Organise signing rides.

- Peter reported that the signing on our patch is in the best shape ever! Well done to everyone! But vigilance / regular checking of your section of route is still essential.
- Next priority will be to remove old/outdated/incorrect/misleading signs – but work together on this with experienced Rangers to avoid misunderstandings.

12) Signing stations on our patch (Robin).

- The stickers are ready to order. Action: **Alan, Robin**.
- Priorities are Clifton Down, Sea Mills, Shirehampton stations.

13) Minutes and matters arising (not already covered) from meeting on June 11th

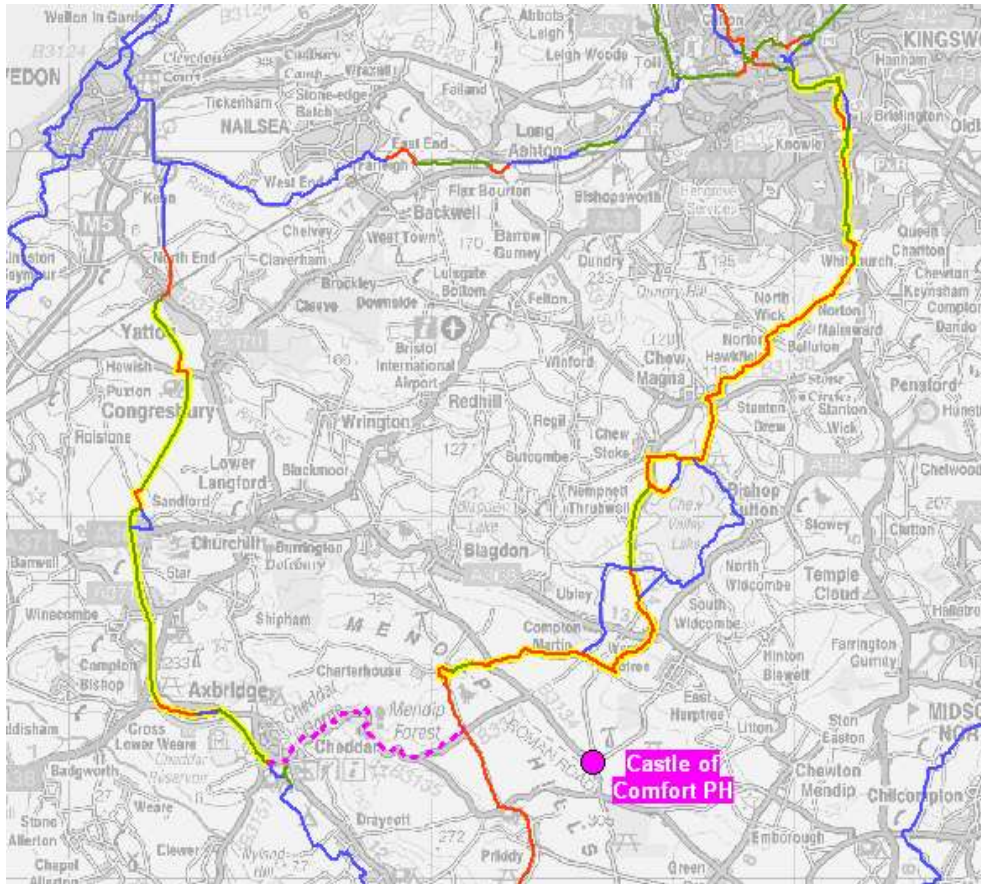
- No time to discuss tonight - so PLEASE **all** read the last minutes as well and inform Peter and Martin of any development / wins from actions, not covered above. Many points still await LA action.

14) Smarter working with Councils (LA and Parish) – how to get things done better and faster? Create our own database of outstanding problems (on our webpage?) Any Other Ideas?

- There has been lots of talk but relatively little action with our LAs in the past.
- Some Rangers becoming frustrated and in danger of loss of enthusiasm as a consequence. We are keen to work with LAs but progress often painfully slow.
- Are BCC going to develop and apply a strategic plan for improving cycling?
- How do we hold LAs to action points that have been raised / agreed?
- How do we ensure that maintenance is carried out once reported?
- Solutions:
- Ask other Ranger groups on RangerNet what they do (**Martin**).
- Using our forthcoming Bristol section of RangerNet we need to map numbered problems, then maintain an attached database detailing precisely where and what each numbered problem is, date first recorded, action needed, by whom, by when, current state of play, and which Ranger or Sustrans employee is driving it etc. This would be invaluable for Rangers and hopefully helpful to LAs. **Martin** to progress development initially.
- We need to dig out old issues from previous minutes (**any offers?**) and add new ones as they arise.

15) AOB

- Audit of signs in Aust / Severn Beach / Bridge area to be carried out after new S Glos signing is put in place (**Myles, Peter, Jane, Mark, Colin**).
- A Social Ride agreed from Yatton - Cheddar – Bristol (Strawberry Line NCN26 and NCN3) on Saturday 10th November. (Yellow and pink on map below) Approx 35 miles. Jane to decide exact route, but care to be taken that it doesn't turn in to a 200km hill-fest! **All Rangers welcome – do come along.**



16) Date of next meeting.

- 7:00pm Monday 10th March 2008, Landsdown PH. **Sarah B** – please check they booked it in as requested.