

HORSE AROUND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY



FREE TO MEMBERS

No. 21 AUTUMN 2007

Hello Everyone

We're back! We apologise, we are so late with this newsletter. We like to get it out to you at the end of August/beginning of September and here we are in October. They say any excuse is better than none; so here's ours....

The recent prolonged spell of good weather, a holiday, and trips to the beach and a rest from horse access work is our excuse. Although our Summer weather turned out okay, spare a thought for the poor flooded people at Worcester; they were still pulling fish out of the horse race track in July!

I expect most of you heard that Adrian came off his horse Eric, whilst leading a horse hike. We had 13 riders on the Drift Dam ride, on April 1st (bad omens) and had just lunched at the Kings Arms at Paul and were looking forward to cantering up the supposedly cleared byway that leads up to Sheffield when suddenly we were unexpectedly faced with a long 'tunnel' of blackthorn at horse's head height. Adrian leading had to duck at speed whilst being whipped by blackthorn. Consequently he came off and unfortunately landed with his foot down a deep gully and broke his leg very badly. Adrian is making a steady recovery, but we did have a very bad start to 2007. We also lost our loveable 27 year old 'Big Ben' Shire/cross. He simply could not get up out of his bed in the mornings. Once up he was fine but it got to every day having to get him up using loading straps. It was all very sad and we miss him greatly.

We had a break from Horse Hikes as usual over the summer, but I hope you got out even if a bit damp and wet with harassing flies! The Horse Hikes have started again now with a couple of completed pre-programme rides.

We attended the BHS National Access Conference in Bath at the end of September. It was well supported and we had some good speakers from Natural England, Sustrans, and MoD access. More about Sustrans on page 5.

Finally if you haven't renewed your membership you will find a reminder enclosed, we hope you will rejoin to continue supporting our vital work to improve horse access.

Margaret

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and more

***** Advance Notice *****
Chat and good cheer!

Our Informal Xmas Drink
will be
on Tuesday 18 December
7:30pm
at

The Engine Inn, Crippleasease,
Nanclodra



On the Cliffs at Botallack – see next page

WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

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Horse Hike From Chapel Carn Brea

After the very long Summer break, Mandy organised an impromptu warm up ride. We met at Chapel Carn Brea for a 'walk and trot only' quiet ride deliberately with a small number of riders. It was good to get out and enjoy the continuing warm and settled weather. Most of us had over-dressed and soon became very hot. We set off across Bartinney and over Numphra Common and out to Leswidden. We safely crossed over the St. Just road and headed down Bosvargus. Reaching Tregaseal, we turned up on to the moor passing Tregaseal stone circle and on up to Carn Kenidjack. The moorland tracks were lovely to ride as the dry weather had kept the ground firm and even. We covered ground on Trewellard Moor and over to Carn Eanes before heading down to the Trewellard Arms Hotel for refreshments. Levant road and the cliff tracks summoned us next with the usual stunning sea and cliff views. This is of the very few places horse riders can ride along our beautiful coast. This is why we want the impending new Coastal Access legislation to include and thus improve such access for horse riders. We reached Botallack then soon joined up with No-Go-By Hill and made our way down to Nancherrow. We retraced our route back through Bosvargus and Leswidden and Numphra and Bartinney.

These commons paths were strimmed out a good while ago and are still looking tidy and easy to use. We returned to Chapel Carn Brea having covered over 11 miles. All the horses were well behaved and didn't put a hoof wrong. We had a lovely ride. Big thanks to Mandy for getting the horse hikes started up. We have a full new programme hopefully with something for everyone.



George on Tavern followed by Lizzie Matthews

A Saturday Ride in April

Two riders, Butch and Sundance, alias Sandra Barnes and Ann Bressington, set off from Trengwainton Gardens at 11 am on horses, Summer and Harry. They rode up Jiggers Hill into Madron. From there they went through Kennels Lane to come out by Kitty Noy's cottage. By now the mist was lifting and there was glorious sunshine. Ann proceeded to remove a layer of clothing getting it stuck around her hat but with a bit of a struggle and a build up of oncoming traffic she completed the transformation and they moved on.

They were now heading for Trythal Moor and then on to Bodrifty. They followed the track along taking a right turn across Mulfra to come out at Heather Brea and then took the road to Gurnards Head Hotel.

On arrival they were made very welcome by the staff who were anxious to make sure that the horses had adequate room and facilities. The hitching posts were in place and the gardener appeared with some new binder twine for the tie-ups. Harry and Summer were served with a bucket of water and Sandra and Ann were served V and T's and two velvet bar stools were brought out for them to sit on. Then for lunch, mushroom omelette, chips and a green salad followed by chocolate torte and clotted cream. For Sandra, this was then followed by several more V and T's!

After Sandra had sobered they mounted up, Sandra revealed her map, (upside down), and they headed for Rosemergy along the coastal road where they met the open-top bus, a fire-engine and a duck asleep at the side of the road. They took the National Trust bridleway to Watch Croft where the view was breathtaking - a "must see". They then took a left turn towards Four Parishes and soon arrived at Greenborough Stack. As they passed Bosillack Farm, they met a herd of cows on their way in for milking. This was a major event for Harry as he's not fond of cows at all! But all was well and Sandra and Ann continued the homeward stretch along the road to Madron. At this point they dismounted to loosen their legs, (age is a cruel thing), and then re-mounted at the Wishing Well turning. At Madron village they parted ways, Ann took the hill down to Heamoor and Sandra went back down Jiggers Hill towards Castle Horneck. All in all, a wonderful ride with wonderful weather!!

Autumn 2007 to New Year 2008 Programme of Horse Hikes

Please note these dates in your diary now

Organiser or Contact

U	Drift Dam	3/4 Nov	Beverly
UU	Gwinear	10/11 Nov	Margaret
U	Madron	24/25 Nov	Anne
U	Polgigga	1/2 Dec	Beverly
U	Poldice Valley (new)	8/9 Dec	Margaret
U	Xmas Cracker (St Just) Festive Ride – 3 Pubs - "obligatory" drink at each	15/16 Dec	Mandy
UU	Great Flat Lode	5/6 Jan	Margaret
U	Chapel Carn Brea	19/20 Jan	Mandy
UU	Halamanning (St Hilary)	2/3 Feb	Alison M.
	Endurance GB SW Training Ride	17 Feb	Mandy

Other rides may be organised according to demand. We welcome suggestions for new rides.

Always check with the organiser or ourselves a few days before. The exact date will be determined by the interest in the ride and/or weather.

Contacts:

Margaret Tel: 01736 795098

Mandy Tel: 01736 871876; Beverly 01736 871151

Alison McCarthy Tel: 01736 710117

Anne Tel: 01736 330623

Hikes are ridden at your own risk. BHS Affiliation covers our members for Public Liability Insurance on organised rides.

Juniors on Horse Hikes

All juniors must be accompanied by a responsible parent or guardian who can look after them and their safety on the ride, and can vouch for their riding competence.

If you have a good idea for a Horse Hike or wish to organise one, do please let us know!

U Easy Ride UU Average Ride

Ann Bressington

Improvements to our Bridleways - The County Council's PPIP Programme



Carter's Grave Lane – Bridleway that runs from Nanledra to Canonstown.

This was an overgrown and muddy quagmire.

The County Council have now renovated the bad western part which is nearly a mile long. It has been restored to a firm natural rab surface.

Paul Bridleway 13 through the woods opposite Lamorna Pottery. This section was a bog. A splendid causeway has now been built.



The County Council has two more boggy bits to sort. These should be done soon.



Many of you will be familiar with the route through to the moor past Men-an-Tol. Last year the route was blocked by an enormous boulder to stop motor bikes.

The County Council have now installed a nice gate to deter the bikes but allow horses through. You must remember that although this wide track has always been ridden it is only designated as a footpath. We have no legal right to use it. We are grateful that the County Council has been able to find a solution.



Finally a picture of some of the drainage work done by the County Council on the Bridleway from Trendrennen Farm to the Treen Cliff-Porthcurno Bridleway.

We reported in the last Horse Around on anticipated progress by the Cornwall County Council in its £2.01M Public Paths Improvement Program (PPIP) to our bridleways and footpaths.

Although programme has fallen behind the original schedule, much good work has been achieved with fantastic renovations achieved on some bridleways.

In Penwith the work plan and progress is as follows:-

Schedule	Parishes
Majority of works completed parishes	Marazion, The St Michael's Way, Penzance, Perranuthnoe, Paul, St Buryan
In Progress	Ludgvan, St Levan
Oct-Dec 2007	Sennen, St Just in Penwith, Morvah, Zennor
Jan-Mar 2008	Towednack, St Ives
Apr-Jun 2008	Hayle, Gwinear-Gwithian
Jul-Sept 2008	St Erth, St Hilary
Oct-Nov 2008	Madron, Sancreed

The budget is proving very tight for the work desired, and work we would have liked to have seen on some bridleways has not been possible.

We have been concerned about some paths not being cleared that should have been, as we found on the Horse Hike on April 1st.

We have discussed these issues with the County Council, but currently we feel we have to check all work that has been done.

We show some pictures on this page. Much work is still going on. As we write this St Levan 52 from Trendrennen to the coast is being resurfaced to improve drainage and prevent it becoming a muddy mess this winter.

The collapsed stone bridge on the bridleway in the woods near Sellan and Drift Dam has been completely rebuilt and restored to look as it did originally.

The bridleway in Sennen going from near the entrance to the Theme Park over to Grebe Farm has been cleared.

We are also checking to ensure that all bridleways restored are properly signed.

We have been promised that the gates on the only bridleway in Marazion are at last going to be repaired.

Coastal Access Update

You may have seen the publicity and concern over Natural England's proposals for legislation to provide access to our coast. At the direction of the government they have concentrated on walking access ignoring other users. This is despite extensive lobbying from riders to canoeists. The government still say riding access is best provided by voluntary agreement. (Flying pigs come to mind!). Why is legislation required for walkers if voluntary agreements can provide all?



Demonstration at Brean Down by riders, cyclists and canoeists to demand access to the coast

On 27th September 2007 at the Labour Party Conference in Bournemouth, Secretary of State, Hilary Benn, announced that the Government intends to legislate so that the public will have the right to walk around the English coast for the first time.

Natural England have been given a clear message that ridden access should be included where practicable. but no doubt the government will try to ignore it – unless ...

THIS IS WHY YOU MUST STILL WRITE TO YOUR MP (Andrew George, for Penwith). Lobbying MPs does work they must be kept aware of the issues and lobbied to act on our behalf.

New Unitary Authority – what will it mean for us?

Firstly all 6 District Councils will disappear. This is supposed to give a big saving as many tasks will not be duplicated. Cornwall County Council will take over everything as the unitary authority. The problem is they then have to reinvent a local structure. There is talk of a division into 4 areas then passing more responsibilities down to parish level with 16 "satellite" groupings of parishes.

Why reinvent the wheel? The theory is there will be savings but we fear that it will in the event result in more jobs for the boys and more remoteness from the real decision making.

Will parishes have the necessary expertise and horse-power to deal with RoW matters. What will this mean for our bridleways? We will wait and see.

Blocked bridleway costs Farmer £2,000

- **A story from Lancashire**

It is reported that a Lancashire Farmer with a long history of deliberately blocking bridleways and footpaths has been prosecuted.

For many years it was alleged that Mr Ellison obstructed a bridleway, which runs over his land near Chipping and made many attempts to discourage people from using the Right of Way, including leaving bales of silage in a gateway, locking gates, tampering with gate catches and aggressively accosting riders and walkers.

For each instance of obstruction he was fined a £200, court costs of £600 and his own legal bill. In addition he was also ordered to pay £700 for the removal of the silage bales a total cost of £2,000.

The cost of bringing a case like this is extremely expensive both financially and in time. The reality is that the costs in preparation and delivery of the case far out weighs the actual fine imposed.

In most cases good liaison and co-operation between landowners and users is the best way forward but unfortunately this does not always resolve the issues, and sadly enforcement seems the only way forward in some instances.

Locally

Cornwall County Council now do have a dedicated and effective Enforcement Team, which is proving very effective and has not as yet had to resort to a prosecution. Most issues can be resolved by good liaison. However in Cornwall there is a large backlog of obstructions to deal with. BUT effective and prompt action on new obstructions is proving productive.

Motor Cycle Confiscated

It is reported that POLICE in St Just and Pendeen have responded to residents' concerns by confiscating the motorcycle of an illegal rider. PC Andy Jones said the force had received numerous complaints about people riding motorcycles on the moors of Pendeen and the St Just area. "We caught a man riding an off-road bike on Sunday afternoon," he said, adding that it will cost the rider around £300 to have the motorcycle returned.

Also it is a criminal offence to take a motor vehicle on a bridleway without due authority.

Modification Orders – Putting New Bridleways on the map.

We are in the process of working with local riders to try and put some routes we ride, or have ridden in the past, onto the map as definitive bridleways. These are paths in Buryan and Sancreed, and Lugdvan. We also are very concerned about the status of some paths in St. Hilary and are shortly to consult with local riders to make decisions about submitting Modification Orders if appropriate.

Will the paths you ride today be available for you to ride tomorrow?

Maybe not, unless they are definitive bridleways. All it requires is a new property owner to arrive who does not like horses, or a 'rider' to upset a landowner, and access can be lost.

Steel Horse News

Sustrans talk at BHS Access Conference

We attended the BHS National Access Conference in Bath at the end of September. It was well supported and we had some good speakers from Natural England, Sustrans, and an MoD access relations officer. It was good to hear the MoD now have an access policy for allowing horse riding and cycling and are trialing many sites with specific trails.

Andy Wistow the network manager for SUSTRANS gave a presentation of the work of SUSTRANS and how they wanted to cooperate with the BHS and provide ridden access where feasible. Seems good news BUT on questioning he acknowledged that SUSTRANS policy was biased towards TARMAC! – NOT GOOD – We have written to SUSTRANS for clarification and pointing out that unsealed surfaces are better for all outside of the town environment. We have listed to the Chief Exec. a shed load of reasons why they should not tarmac and stating they are only designed for the urban cyclist and that leisure/adventure cyclists find tarmac boring and mind-numbing. We await his reply.

In Cornwall you may have seen it just announced that SUSTRANS A project to promote cycling and walking is to be rolled out in Cornwall over the next four years with a £450,000 National Lottery grant, and other funding expected to come from the Cornwall County Council, health care trusts and donations. "The initiative aims to build up an integrated network of cycling and walking trails in the county to make it easier for people to give up cars."

There is no mention here of ridden access! However we will be liaising with Sustrans where possible to ensure we are not forgotten.

SUSTRANS also have a major National Initiative - Connect2 that aims to improve local travel in 79 communities by creating new walking and cycling routes for the local journeys we all make every day. SUSTRANS is competing for a single grant of £50M million from the Big Lottery Fund's Living Landmarks: The People's Millions. The winning project will finally be decided by a public vote on television in December 2007.

Silent Cyclists

A lady was telling me she was out riding her horse along a quiet bridleway when she leaned forward and patted her horse's neck and said, "Oh what a lovely handsome boy you are". At that very moment, a cyclist overtook her and said, "Oh thanks very much for the compliment!". Embarrassment for her but one of the hazards of cyclists coming up behind horse riders silently.

Seriously though, if you are cycling up behind a horse rider please hail a friendly hello. Most horses on hearing a human voice will not then be startled. You will then avoid the animal leaping sideways and ending up in your lap!

GOSS MOOR

The old A30 has been dug up replaced by a superb dedicated equine track and separate cycleway (limited parking near Owl Sanctuary. A new circular trail on the southern moor opens in the spring.

The Kernow Horse Trail

RIDE-UK Cornwall

You may remember that one of the starting triggers for our bridleways association was the British Horse Society Ride-UK project, and the aim of a horse trail from Lands End to Devon.

This year we have at last started to make real progress with the completion of a feasibility study we (with our BHS hats on) have done jointly with Cornwall County Council.

We have planned and surveyed and mapped a full route, based on existing bridleways and ridden paths where feasible together with new sections of off road path, and of course quiet lanes. The "Kernow Horse Trail" is divided into five sections. The first from Lands End to Canonstown is the "Tinnners Trail".

We got a £15k grant from Business Link (EU funding) to pay the CC for this study and further funding from the CC Transport Plan. We are now planning with the CC on how to acquire the funding necessary for implementation.

Although there are many grant schemes available from the lottery to EU funding, getting the funding will not be easy. But if SUSTRANS can be successful we are determined that our project will be. Benefits of the trail will be for local economy, tourism and health, and importantly safe riding.

For more information please visit

www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/RideUK.htm

Cornwall Coast to Coast Trail

The new section of the Coast to Coast Trail at Carnon Downs is now open. This enables horse riders to go truly from Coast to Coast, Portreath to Devoran.



The new A39 bypass has just been opened with the trail going under the new road (picture left). Note the raised walkway for pedestrians for when there is a Spring tide. Cyclists and horse riders will have great enjoyment splashing through the lower flooded path.

We are looking forward to doing this new part of the trail on our next Horse Hike in the Poldice Valley from Bissoe.

Mineral Tramways update

The four new trails are due to be completed by Spring next year. **The Redruth and Chasewater Trail** which links Redruth and the Great Flat Lode Trail through Carharrack to the Poldice Valley Coast to Coast Trail (Chasewater spelling is correct here, named after the old railway).

Portreath Branch Trail – linking Portreath and Redruth.

Tehidy Trail – linking Portreath to the Red River through Tehidy Park

Tolgus Trail – alongside the B3300 linking Redruth to the Coast to Coast Trail via the "Gold Centre".

The Portreath to Tehidy Woods new link is still under construction but the golf course T diversion around the back of the T is being challenged by the Ramblers and they have forced an unnecessary expensive Public Enquiry in mid November. These trails are financed as part of a big grant funded mining heritage project – including mine and village restoration.

Conservation Grazing

The Natural England Heathland Project, which is funded by the EU, is now beginning to take shape here in Penwith. You may see moorland being enclosed with barbed wire fences and gates being put in. There is much debate on the pros and cons of the scheme. No one likes more fences and gates, yet there are advantages for both habitat and access to have a management regime, and grazing if managed correctly can do a very good job.

We are liaising with Natural England/DEFRA over such grazing schemes to ensure that horse access is preserved. Remember we (riders) have no legal right of access on many of the moors and open land which we ride. Right to Roam (Open Access) only gave rights to walkers!

Areas in Penwith being affected by such schemes are Trencrom Hill, Bakers Pit (Nancledra), Old North Road (St Just), Carn Kenidjack.(St Just), Carn Galver (possibly). Unfortunately wider consultation or information on these schemes has been poor, and this has caused much concern. We as a bridleway group cannot be directly concerned with the wider issues of principle environmental impact etc.

Summary of the issues at each site are:

Trencrom Hill – We have liaised with the NT to ensure the existing permissive horse path is preserved with easy to use bridleway gates and mounting blocks.

Bakers Pit (Nancledra) – Cornwall Wildlife Trust have provided a nice bridleway link (only permissive at present) to link Georgia to definitive bridleway around Castle-an-Dinas.

Old North Road (St Just) – The scheme here will mean gates on this unsurfaced county road, a traffic control order allowing gates has been in place for some years. We have asked that conventional easy to open bridleway gates be placed along side the large gates to be installed for any required vehicle access.

Carn Kenidjack.(St Just) – In consultation with local riders we have got agreement that all current access points to the moor will be fitted with conventional easy to open bridleway gates

Carn Galver (possibly) – We should be consulted if any work is planned.

Finally a word about the cattle being used to graze these areas. There is concern from some of our members about having to ride through areas where there are cattle. In our experience in riding on such areas on the Lizard, the fierce looking cattle, often longhorns, completely ignore you. The horses likewise ignore the cattle. If we insist that there should be no livestock where ever we ride, our chances of getting new bridleways will be very slim.

The cattle used in these areas will be docile and soon get used to horses passing. In general these areas are not confined, so usually any cattle will not be blocking your path.

One good point about these schemes, for us, is that they do go towards formalising our access and indicating that we are really allowed onto these moorland areas.

PAROW - Penwith Access and Rights of Way – www.parow.org.uk

Chris (our Jolly Green Giant) is keeping up the good work, he is now also looking after the bridleways and footpaths in Perranuthnoe. The ridden paths on Bartinney Hill are keeping in excellent condition and being well used by riders and walkers and local resident Peter Smith has done further work in keeping the path from Dowran clear. Chris has also done much work in St Erth whose parish has again failed to cut any paths. We have further projects afoot and by Christmas we hope to have some really exciting news for the maintenance of our bridleways and moorland tracks.

Penmellyn Veterinary Hospital

This year's BHS Cornwall General Meeting which was held at the newly built Penmellyn Veterinary Hospital near Newquay. We then had a tour around the new 'state of the art' animal hospital with separate wards for cats and dogs and other small pets. The horse hospital was truly amazing with full facilities. The horse operating theatre was really interesting. The operating table was like a series of huge padded lilos with horse-shaped head rest. Overhead runs a huge gantry that passes from the outside, through the padded anaesthetic suite and over the operating area. Specialised X-ray rooms with a sliding table for small animals and treatment/examination rooms make up quite a place. It is staffed 24 hours a day, and all units have CCTV. Outside there is stabling for horse patients, a mare and foaling unit and isolation stable with recovery paddock and field. Until now, a really sick horse had to go up to Bristol for treatment, now they can do everything here and get specialists down if its something the 10 resident vets cannot do themselves. It is reassuring to know that we have such good facilities now here in Cornwall.

Harry Potter Rules Ok ?

MODIFICATION ORDERS/DEDICATIONS – A BLACK ART??

Harry Potter – we need you!

We are very concerned at how long its taking for some Modification Orders to come up for review. We have heard that a MO that was submitted in 2003 is No. 54 on the list. At that rate it will be 10 years before it comes up. We believe that the Dementors keep slipping in the ones they want. We are particularly concerned about a bridleway MO at Mulfra that has been waiting a similar length of time. We and Dumbledore, err sorry Duncan of the Ramblers are trying to get a wand on this dark art to unveil the procedures at County Council legal services. No-one seems to be able to get to 'Lord Voldemort'! Despite repeated written requests and owl mails the legal services team never give answers. Even the Cornwall CC Countryside Service don't seem know what's coming up when and why! We Muggles have no chance! Is it going to take the efforts of The Order of the Pheonix to get to the bottom of the Legal Service's deathly hallows!

The hocus pocus that seems to be going on is one for the Freedom of Information Act 2000. We will have to get the Ministry of Magic to send a Troll to find out what is going on!