

# HORSE AROUND

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE  
WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH HORSE SOCIETY



Free to Members

No. 34 Spring 2013

## *Straight from the horse's mouth*

Hello Everyone, and here's to a better 2013! Could it possibly be worse? Someone said, that 2012 and winter has not been a good year for horse owners, battling with the elements and little riding out. It was the wettest May and June since 1766 and the wettest year for 100 years. With unprecedented rainfall we struggled to put on horse hikes due to the swampy saturated start to our Autumn horse hike programme.

Gwinear was cancelled due to the horrible wet day and Anne B. had to hurriedly 'uncancel' the Loe Pool ride around Penrose estate, Helston as the forecast suddenly improved dramatically.

We got the lovely picture opposite published in the Cornishman after grabbing a group of passing walkers to take it for us! Read write up by Tamsin Thomas. The Drift Dam went ahead during an interlude of good weekend weather in November but the ride missed out some of the off-road sections. The Christmas Cracker ride didn't run: the first time since the bridleway group was formed. The damage done to our bridleways runs into millions of pounds and with many closure notices served. It is more important than ever that horse riders report any damage or problems found, either to us, via our website or direct to Cornwall Council. Although we cannot always wave the proverbial magic wand to get them fixed, it alerts us and other riders to the problems out there.

Anne ran the Madron horse hike in January but much was on quiet lanes. However, those who went enjoyed getting out somewhere different. It may be that we will need to put on the occasional 'road ride' if we have further prolonged spells of truly awful weather in the future. At least it will enable riders to get out and socialize away from standard stomps. I'm afraid to admit that recently we have ridden our steel horses more than our steeds due to weather and other reasons. We apologise for the long gap in the horse hike programme but again it was pointless trying to run rides in the seemingly relentless unpredictable conditions. We enclose a hh programme in this newsletter.

It is AGM time and we do hope you will continue to support WPBA and renew your subs. If you are due for renewal you will get a reminder. **CARROT:** Many of you are making good use of the Mountain Warehouse 15% off deal when you show your card in store. You will soon recover the cost of your membership when you shop there or indeed Millets and Penrose Outdoors, Truro. **and STICK:** We need a strong membership to prove there are lots of riders and off-road cyclists who want a good network of bridleways and traffic free routes.

C U at the AGM. (If you can't come and collect your card, then do send me an sae.)

Margaret

## *In This Issue*

**Horse Hike Reports**  
**Bits and Pieces**  
**The Modification Order Process**  
**Changes at Cornwall Countryside Service**  
**Steel Horse News**  
**Ministerial Letter**

*and more ...*



*Riders on The Loe Bar Ride  
pictured in the grounds of Penrose Estate (NT)*

## **Annual General Meeting**

**Featuring a talk  
by Allen and Page feed specialist**  
on the benefits of feeding a barley and molasses free diet, thought to cause lots of today's problems, i.e, bolshy behaviour, lumps and bumps, itchy skin.

**Tuesday 26 March**

**At the Yacht Inn, Penzance  
(opposite Jubilee Pool)**

**Start 7:30 prompt**

## **WEST PENWITH BRIDLEWAYS ASSOCIATION**

*Chairman:* Adrian Bigg, Treveffa Farm, Trevega, Zennor, TR26 3BL  
*Treasurer:* Beverley Jenkin, *Secretary:* Margaret Bigg,

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**Web:** <http://www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/westpenwithbridleways>

**Tel:** 01736 795098

## Membership Renewal

If your membership is due, a renewal invitation is included with this newsletter. Many of you did renew for two years which saves both you and ourselves on administration. If you have already joined for the coming year, your new membership card has been enclosed with this newsletter.

For those of you who find renewing by post tedious you may renew (or join) online. (paypal /credit/debit)

### RENEW ONLINE

[www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/westpenwithbridleways/JoinOnline.htm](http://www.bhsaccesscornwall.org.uk/westpenwithbridleways/JoinOnline.htm)  
(address is case sensitive)

### Membership Benefits:

Our members can already get a discount at Penrose Outdoors in Truro and Millets upon production of membership card.

(New!) Mountain Warehouse in Penzance, Truro or Falmouth now gives 15% discount to WPBA members upon production of a valid WPBA membership card. They have a full range of good outdoor wear for all types of outdoor activities.

Yet another good reason for staying a member of WPBA.

## Loe Bar Ride

On Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> October 13 horses and riders met in Helston Flora Motors car park for an exhilarating ride which took in bridleways, streams and even the beach!

We set off along the track towards Loe Pool. All of the horses settled down very quickly and the scenery was breathtaking as we rode alongside the pool. We then made our way past Penrose house and took the track along Shadywalk wood towards the Loe Bar. We made our way down over the cliff onto the shingle beach. We took a leisurely walk along the bar with the waves crashing just below us. All of the horses behaved impeccably along this stretch of beach, and the wind was bracing.

We then headed up the other side towards Gunwalloe, where we stopped at the top and looked back at the view of Mounts Bay. We could clearly see Porthleven and the next bay along which was Praa Sands, and some impressive ships out in the sea.

We then made our way to Gunwalloe and followed the narrow roads towards Degibna.

This road then took us back along the other side of Loe Pool taking us back to the car park. The ride took 2 ½ hours and was thoroughly enjoyed by all. Just as we were boxing up, we had a few spots of rain, so we were very fortunate with the weather. Tamsin and Ronnie



*Riders pictured at the start in Helston Boating Pool Car Park*

*See front page for picture at Penrose with Penrose house in the background*

## Horse Hike Programme – Spring/Summer 2013

Please note these dates in your diary now			Organiser or Contact
U or UU	Chapel Carn Brea	7 April	Amanda
U or UU	Helston/Loe Pool	21 April	Anne
U or UU	Mining Trails, Camborne/Redruth	5 May	M & A
U	Morvah	19 May	Christine Hichens
U	Nancladra	2 June	M & A
U or UU	Gwinear	9 June	M & A
UU	Drift (Sancreed)	23 June	Beverly
U or UU	Lizard	7 July	Alison Lugg

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

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

**Contacts:** Margaret and Adrian Tel: 01736 795098  
Anne Bressington 01736 330623,  
Mandy Nicholson 01736 871876, Beverly Jenkin 01736 871151  
Chris Hichens 01736 788729, Alison Lugg 01326 241545

Horse 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!

**Grading of Rides:** U Easier Ride UU Average Ride  
Grading is for guidance only – please do check with the organiser for details of length etc. Where possible rides are tailored to those who attend.

## **Horse Hike from Madron**

On beautiful sunny Sunday morning in January only four of us set off from Madron church along Kennel Lane and on through Break My Neck Lane. We turned left towards Tryhall, passed the school and turned right towards Bodrifty. The weather really was fantastic, fresh but very sunny and all horses and riders had the "feel good factor". We took the lane just before Bodrifty up on to the moors and rode the track which leads to Ding Dong mine. This track was really quite wet and muddy and we were met by a noisy trials motorbike which upset a couple of the horses for a while. After this we headed back towards Madron, avoiding actually stepping hoof onto the sodden moorland paths. Just passed the Carne the riders took the track through Home Farm and down to Trengwainton Gardens. Here we went our separate ways. It was a lovely ride on a lovely day. A big thank you to all who came. Anne.

## **Paths for Communities Grant Scheme**

As we reported in the last HorseAround DEFRA has a £2M grant scheme for new bridleways. However the scheme does require cooperation from landowners in dedicating routes.

There are two bridleway schemes being worked on in West Cornwall.

## **Bridleway Connecting Chapel Carn Brea to Brane**

West Penwith Bridleways Association is wishing to complete the bridleway connection through from the existing length of Bridleway 76 that runs along below Bartinney Castle to a path through St Euny Well to the Byway at Brane. The path has always been freely ridden but is not recorded as bridleway and is in very poor repair and boggy. If we can get agreement of landowners there is a great opportunity to get funding to significantly improve the path and make it definitive bridleway. However getting support of all landowners is currently a stumbling block

## **Bridleways in Penrose Estate (National Trust) Helston**

The National Trust are putting forward a scheme to create definitive paths from Helston around Loe Pool/Penrose and restoring a lost bridleway link to Porthleven. Their initial plans fell short of providing the full bridleway routes that we currently ride on our Loe Pool/Penrose Horse Hike.

We are liaising with the National Trust and are hopeful that their plans will be revised as a result of our input.

## **Exotic Diseases**

The Schmallenberg virus is doing much damage amongst sheep and cows and it is with great concern for the future of what may lie in store for horse owners. Defra are very concerned with the outbreak of both plant and animal diseases brought on by climate change and the increase in general travel around the world. They are busy beavering away at the Purbright Laboratory trying to produce vaccines for the perceived threats of the near future.

One such disease is Swamp or Equine Infectious Anaemia (EIA) which occasionally is seen in the UK often associated with imported horses. There was a case in Cornwall last year. Like Schmallenberg it is spread by biting insects.

## **Bits and Pieces**

### **Hay Making in Wet Summers**

The last two wet Summers has seen an increase in hay barn fires due to spontaneous combustion. Stacking damp hay runs the risk of this happening. Farmers have struggled to avoid baling damp hay. Spontaneous combustion can happen if hay has not dried out sufficiently when stored. The natural fermentation process takes place due to the natural occurring bacteria and this leads to a build up of heat which cannot escape from the tightly packed haystack. The high moisture content can literally 'overcook' it. The temperature rises to the point of which fire starts. Bales need to be constantly monitored, especially in the first 6 weeks, the highest risk period. If in doubt allow a little more airspace between bales as this will help heat build up to dissipate.

### **Rumania**

In a bid to join the modern world, Rumania has banned all horse and carts from the highway.

### **iPhone Insurance Claims Excuses**

Now I've heard of riders and cyclists dropping their iPhones whilst riding, but this story has to beat them all! A Devon farmer has topped a league of strange insurance claims after losing his iPhone up a cow's rear. Apparently it disappeared inside the cow after he used the torch function during calving. It eventually made an appearance, but the mucky phone was too damaged to use again. So when your mare foals, take care!

### **HS2 – High Speed Train Could ride Rough Shod over Horse Routes**

The recent fanfare announcement about the new high speed train network has put a lot of people into a spin as it will cut through communities and some beautiful countryside. Bridleways and other riding routes will be at risk. Fortunately down here we are not affected BUT we have to constantly look out for road schemes and other developments that can prejudice our riding routes.

### **War Horse Train Trotters**

At the start of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War 40,000 horses travelled on trains to leave our shores from Southampton for the Continent for war service.

### **Some old Horse Statistics**

In the 1950's there were 30,000 Dartmoor ponies on the moor. Today there are only 850. One hundred years ago there were 100,000 horses working in London.

### **RDA Fund Raising**

Our member, Stella Redgrave works tirelessly fundraising for the Riding for the Disabled South West Cornwall branch. In 2011 she personally raised £3,800 and in 2012 another £3,200 by collecting unwanted stuff and selling them at car boot sales and other venues. Although this is only a quarter of the funds they need, Stella is doing vital and sterling work and puts in many hours so doing. If you have any books, good clothes, old tools, garden items, horsey stuff or anything quirky give Stella a ring on 01736 874 955 and help RDA to continue with the excellent work they do.

## Horse Hike on Mining Trails, Camborne

On the first Sunday in December Sunday eight members met in South Wheal Francis Car Park for a wintry ride along the mineral tramway trails. It was a cold grey day with sporadic squalls of heavy drizzle as the contingency, all wearing hi viz, set off on the Great Flat Loe Trail past Wheal Buller and then onto the Tresavean trail above Lanner. Hardly a soul was met, only the occasional dog walker and a couple of other horse riders. From the end of the trail we rode quiet lanes took a bridgeway we have not ridden before to the pretty hamlet at Trethellan Water. Pigmy goats greeted us as we passed through and rejoined quiet lanes before rejoining the Tresavean Trail to start making our way home. Interestingly the Trethellan Water bridgeway is incorrectly signed as a footpath. We have queried this with Cornwall Council who say there is an error but until it is sorted they cannot change the sign. We are now chasing them further on this!

After retracing our steps on the Tresavean Trail we headed along the bridgeway towards Brea village, then took a tour of the mine workings just off from the bridgeway. As the weather was closing in again we then returned passed Wheal Buller back to the start above Carnkie. A 9.5 mile ride completed. Everyone was just glad to get out on to the lovely mining trail tracks instead of being confined to the washed out and muddy bridgeways and tracks of Penwith.

## PAROW UPDATE

Unfortunately at the present time we have been unable to secure continued grant funding for the continued direct employment of the PAROW Paths Officers Chris and Kirstan. PAROW CIC is continuing and is still doing contract clearance work. However any clearance work that PAROW now does has to be paid for at full cost. We are planning to continue to run PAROW in this "hibernation mode" until such time when we hope that more funding will be found.

## St Just Training Ride

The ride organised by the South West group of Endurance GB, run by Mandy Nicholson and Jane James started at St Just Rugby club on 3rd March.

The route took us along the cliff path past the Crowns mine at Botallack, Levant mine, then in land over the moors to Chun Castle and Chun Quoit. We were lucky the wind had dried up the mud on the moors making for good going. There was an incident with a field of pigs which the bigger horses were convinced were the scariest monsters ever seen, there was much snorting and shying, "if you think they're frightening, I think they're petrifying, the devil incarnate" leaping about, until Honey the Haflinger, said "enough of this nonsense you big wusses" and calmly led us past.

Our group of five riders, Peta-Jane Field on Sprite, Andrea Simmons on Archie, Cathy Angove on Honey, Leah Kaute on Jerry, and myself Beverley Jenkin on Charlie, encompassed all sorts and sizes of horses from 12.2 to 17 hands.



Leah Kaute on Jerry

Leah was the youngest rider to take part at ten. She and her mum Cathy enjoyed their first taste of endurance. We had all hacked over from Sennen, so Leah and Jerry had clocked up twenty miles by the time they had ridden home.

All in all a good day had by all, roll on the rest of the endurance season.

Beverly

## Changes at Cornwall Countryside Service

The Countryside Service budget continues to be cut and the Council has just announced further drastic cuts to jobs and services. A Big and confusing change is that the job of managing and maintaining our Rights of Way and open Spaces has been "given" to Cormac Solutions Ltd, a "private", and supposedly profit making company. This has seemingly been done without any tendering process or specification for the job they are to do. Cormac Solutions has taken over existing countryside staff and then is making around 30% redundant! The Cornwall Council Countryside staff that remain look after the definitive map and associated orders, and major enforcement role.

### The Summary situation is:

- Cormac Solutions Ltd are to Manage and Maintain the Row Network on behalf of Cornwall Council
- Cormac will be allocated a "revenue" budget for this task and with these funds they will keep paths in repair and hopefully gradually improve the network.
- Cornwall Council are specifying "standards" against which the network will be assessed.
- Cormac will undertake a rolling survey to monitor and assess the network against these standards.
- Cornwall Council will do parallel sample assessments to verify Cormac's statements.
- Cormac will commit to the level of improvement (or decline) that they will achieve with the money that Cornwall Council gives them.

The whole situation is very concerning as budgets are being cut further yet the network already is in a very bad overall state. Further it is not clear who and how the network is to be managed other than by a "Service Standards" document that is still being written. Cart before horse comes to mind.

The BHS and Cornwall Countryside Access forum is currently asking serious questions on these plans and the whole process.

## Horse Hike from Drift

On a Sunday in the middle of November, we were fortunate to find a lovely sunny interlude in the wet and dreary weather enabling our Horse Hike from Drift Dam to go ahead as planned. As some of the bridleways we usually use are currently in a terribly muddy and quagmire state we decided to stick mainly to the roads.

We assembled in the car park by Drift Dam and before crossing over the A30 at Drift and heading off for Chyenthal along the quiet and narrow lane. However, we met a tanker lorry and then a car towing a horse trailer which required some maneuvering skills on the part of the 12 riders to safely pass. We also met a family with a pushchair walking along the road, probably to avoid the muddy paths.

From Chyenthal we took the bridleway up to the road leading to Kerris. On reaching Kerris we carried straight on along the bridleway track passing Redhouse and then out on to the Lamorna road. Eventually, we turned off left and rode up to Castallack. PAROW had recently cut back the bridleway and this made for a more pleasant ride through to the back road that took us to Sheffield, and then onto the Kings Arms at Paul.

On reaching Sheffield we turned right for Paul and the Kings Arms. We enjoyed refreshments in the busy car park and so did Eric who always looks forward in particular to the Kings Arms, he knows the way!



*Eric enjoying his pint*

After various delighted children had sat on Mary Gribble's little horse Smokey for a parental photo, we moved off through the village and took the byway past the Cricket Ground to rejoin the road at Sheffield. A track was taken left and hoof steps retraced to Chyenthal and back to Drift.

A big thank you to Beverley Jenkin for organising and leading a safe 8 plus mile ride. Everyone enjoyed getting out for a social horse hike and not least the now happy horses! .



*Tracy Harris with Monty and Tamsin Thomas with Ronnie*

## Protecting Forests

DEFRA has announced that a new public body is to be established that will protect forests for future generations.

This follows on from last July's report from the the Independent Panel on Forestry which recognosied that the quality of access to the public forest estate is unrivalled and that this should be secured for the nation for the long term.

## Animals Act due for Reform

We still await the government to make good their promise to amend the Animals Act so that landowners are not deemed liable for incidents involving their animals: as long as the keeper has not been negligent or at fault. This is why landowners insist on installing awful self-closing gates for fear of stock getting out and causing an accident on a road. Should they no longer be liable for incidents clearly beyond their control, we should be able to return to safer gates that are not mouse-traps for horses!

## Chun Downs and Carnyorth Common

Ian Cook (of Save Penwith Moors) has made applications under the 2006 Commons Act to register these areas as Common Land, by providing evidence that they were wrongly excluded from the commons register when the register was originally compiled. He also made application for Carn Galver to be registered.

Each Application results in a Public Inquiry (PI). PIs have been held for Carn Galver and Chun Downs. The result for Carn Galver is known and it has been deemed to be Common Land. We do not yet know the result for Chun Downs.

## Right of Horse Access

There is a special class of Common land associated with old Urban districts which grants the right of "air and exercise" to the public and this has been deemed to include horse riding.

Carnyorth Common is all within the old urban district of St Just. A small part of Chun Downs is also within the old urban district.

Consequently if these two applications are successful it will give the legal RIGHT to horse riders to access these areas.

The granting of common status to Carn Galver does not give access rights to horses neither does it grant any new rights to walkers as the land is already Open Access (for walkers).

REMEMBER although we currently ride all these areas we have NOT the right to ride them and could be stopped at anytime (however unlikely).

## STEEL HORSE NEWS

Over 100 cyclists died on the roads during 2012. Five cyclists were killed on the roads during the first two weeks of January 2013. An all party group of MPs are getting involved in "Get Britain Cycling". The idea is to get a better infra-structure in place to encourage more cycling and to make it more accessible. Initially it is to promote safer routes to work and school. The health and environmental benefits are well documented and recognised. Naughty cyclists have been much in the news with aggressive pavement riding and jumping red lights and ignoring the law, and this has not helped the case and general image of cyclists.

**However, last year, £100M was invested in cycling.** A cross party review will be out in a few months time.

NHS hospital statistics for 2010/11 show that there were nearly 40,000 hospital episodes arising from equestrians being injured and needing hospital treatment as a result of an accident on the road with a vehicle.

**Just think what £100M investment in new bridleways and links would do for creating a safe network for horse riders in Britain!!**

### Horses on Cycle Trails

We have recently been cycling in Devon – checking out the Tarka trail. We were dismayed to see 'No Horses' signs and to find many sections would have been far better not tarmaced. Only a few miles at the southern end were horses allowed and even then there was not a sign to say so. We have also been cycling around Bath N. Somerset and found a good section of wide tow path along the Kennet and Avon canal that could easily accommodate horse riders yet they are not allowed.

We have been particularly pursuing Devon CC as they have 80 miles of off-road cycle trails and horse riders are only allowed on 17.5 miles of sections of trail

**Andrew George MP has written to the minister Richard Benyon on our behalf** to ask him what is he doing about this when he has stated that horse riders should be allowed on cycleways as Local Authorities continue to ignore the Minister's statement. We have just received a sympathetic response from Richard Benyon but with the get out response that in the end it is up to local authorities. However the minister did also say and signed in his own hand that:

**"On a national level, Natural England is continuing to work towards making more multi user routes available to horse riders. Its programme of dedication of national nature reserves to open access, over the next few years, will accommodate higher rights where possible.**

**Furthermore, the Government Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement on Access states that "we want as many people as possible to be able to access green space, including woodlands, for exercise, leisure and recreational purposes and, in particular, we are keen to see greater multi-use access to woodland in and around our towns and cities." We will be working with the Forestry Commission to take this work forward. Defra is also discussing with the Equestrian Access Forum its document 'Making Ways for Horses' and how the recommendations in that document might be taken forward.**

. Margaret and Adrian

### **The Modification Order Process – (Mulfra DMMO where are we now)?**

The Definitive Map Modification Order is the legal process by which the general public can apply to get a route, historically used by the public, on to the map as a footpath or bridleway. Most of you are aware of the application to claim a bridleway route from Mulfra that has now been in the Cornwall Council system for 13 years! It was submitted in 1999 – a vital route claimed by horse riders that leads out on to the Penwith Moors. It is outrageous that still this DMMO has not come up for final review and process by the M.O. Panel.

We currently have asked serious questions off Cornwall Council about the processing of these orders and why this order in particular has not been attended to. Five years ago we were told work was starting on processing it.

Typically most councils generally process 10 or 12 DMMOs a year, Cornwall seems to be averaging only one or two at present despite promised improvements. With more cuts we cannot see the situation improving.

The DMMO process supposedly protects the routes we ride if they are not already recorded onto the definitive map as bridleways. However a 15 year wait does nothing for today's riders. Further by the time the order is processed many user witnesses may have died or moved away.

There are currently 98 unprocessed DMMOs in the queue.

THE WHOLE PROCESS IS FAILING US!

**For those brave enough to look at Cornwall Council DMMO list – here is the link**  
<http://db.cornwall.gov.uk/Mos/modorder.asp>



**Tarka Trail**

**No Horses Allowed WHY!**

### **Riding Verges**

Unless there is a specific local bylaw the highway where you can legally ride normally goes from hedge to hedge. Attempts are often made to stop you by the use of a fence, hedge 'pretty white stones' mowing or planting up by adjacent property owners. The practise of "encroachment of property in a clandestine way in a bid to claim it" is legally known as Perpresture and constitutes an obstruction.

HOWEVER – Do not deliberately damage verges if conditions are very bad, or if landowners are trying to look after the verges (within reason). BUT verges often do play an important role in making our riding safer and more enjoyable.