

## **Minutes of a meeting of Hamsterley Trailblazers held on Monday 9 January 2006 at 6.30pm in the Forest Classroom**

**Present:** Andy Samanjoul (in the chair)  
Marie Brown  
Vicky Chilcott  
Mat Clark  
Ollie Graham  
Chris Goldsworthy  
Robin Lofthouse  
Alex Maclennan (FC)  
Bill Pike  
Ashley Scott  
Martin Stout

**Apologies for Absence** were received from Jamie Butcher, Pete Oughton, Kathryn and Neil Gander.

**1. Minutes of Last Meeting** The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2005 were approved as a correct record.

### **2. Matters arising from the Minutes**

**2.1 Vandalism** A letter of apology had still not been received and Ollie agreed to contact the police over the matter.

**2.2 Skills Area** Robin had emailed Neil a copy of updated cycle maps for including on the website and Vicky said she would check with Neil and Dean that this had been received.

**2.3 Bike Count** Alex said he would email the Glentress survey questionnaire to Ollie so that the next Hamsterley bike survey could be as comprehensive as possible. It was also agreed to liaise with FC over what questions they would like included eg Visitor Centre and other facilities. It was agreed to organise the survey just prior to Easter. It was noted the batteries needed re-charging on the bike counters. Alex also said a bike counter would be put on the Downhill and 4X courses.

**2.4 Rally** Trailblazers had received £600 for marshalling the Ripon Motor Club Rally which was gratefully accepted.

**3. Statement of Accounts** The Statement of Accounts for the end of December 2005 was presented together with latest membership details. Discussion took place on the amount refunded to FC from the £15 membership fee for parking. Currently this was £10 but FC agreed this would be reduced to £5. It was further agreed, as an incentive for people to join now, that new members joining between January and end of March 2006 would receive full membership until end March 2007 for the standard annual membership fee of £15 or £20. It was suggested people taking part in club rides sign on in a similar way to those trailbuilding after reading the relevant Risk Assessment. It was also agreed to check out the insurance situation for club rides. **(Action: Bill/Ollie/Vicky)**

### **3. AGM**

It was agreed the AGM would take place on 3 April 2005. It was agreed Andy, Ollie, Bill and Vicky liaise over production of the Annual Report and that funders be invited to attend. As last year, the AGM would be seen as an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the last year.

### **4. DVD**

Alex suggested putting together a DVD to show biking at Hamsterley (including downhilling with Descend) and said that FC would be willing to fund it. Discussion also took place on organising a Hamsterley stand for the World Cup Event at Fort William in May 2006, although it was recognised the timetable for doing this was possibly too tight for this year.

**(Action: Alex/Ollie/Andy)**

### **5. Rabbit Run Trail Extension**

Mat tabled a proposed extension to the Rabbit Run that he felt could be implemented quickly and with minimal cost, providing it did not conflict with existing planned FC operations. Members liked the suggestion and it was agreed Robin and Ollie look at this whilst studying the proposed new Red Route on 13 January 2006. It was noted that it was now hoped to put in for planning permission for the new Red Route as soon as possible.

### **6. Cycling Development Officer**

It was reported that Ollie had recently been appointed to the new post of Cycling Development Officer working in partnership with Groundwork West Durham, Durham Dales Primary Care Trust and Teesdale District Council. Key responsibilities for the post were to develop and deliver cycle related projects in the Teesdale area, working in conjunction with statutory, voluntary and other organisations. Members congratulated Ollie on this appointment.

### **7. Open Adventure Event – Sunday 12 March 2006**

Vicky advised that an Open Adventure Event would be held in Hamsterley Forest on Sunday 12 March 2006. The event was in Trailquest format on mountain bike and on foot. The race would take approximately 5 hours to complete. Further details and entry could be found on [www.openadventure.com](http://www.openadventure.com). It was agreed to circulate all members with details of the event and it was agreed Trailblazers help in whatever way they could.

### **9. Calendar of Events**

It was agreed to continue rides from the Forest as a regular monthly event, but to move these to the second Sunday in each month leaving at 10.30am from the Bike Hire Car Park. It was also agreed each ride give an easy and an extended option to cater for all levels of riders. The next ride would take place on Sunday 12 February at 10.30am. The March ride would coincide with the Open Adventure Event on 12 March and it was agreed to defer a decision on this to the next meeting. The April ride would take place on Sunday 9 April.

Discussion took place on the format for future Trailblazers meetings and it was agreed that formal committee meetings alternate with informal, social meetings at a local pub.

It was noted Hilary Dunne from Teesdale DC had asked for details of events for inclusion in the Teesdale Events Guide and Vicky agreed to forward this information. Alex also said he would include details of Trailblazer meetings and rides in the Active Woods Campaign.

#### **10. Voluntary Co-ordinators Forum Event – 19 January 2006**

Ollie reported that 2D were organising this event at the Bowburn Community Centre from 9.30am to 12.30pm if anyone was able to attend.

#### **11. Packhorse Trails – Cyclists, Walkers and Horse-riders**

Bill said the Parish Paths Partnership was being allocated additional funding for Teesdale and Wear Valley and that it could be beneficial to discuss with other user groups which brideways to improve or extend. Link routes were of particular interest. It was agreed to invite a representative from other user groups to a future meeting (Action: Vicky/Bill)

#### **12. Ride Plan**

Bill circulated a draft 'Ride Plan' that cyclists could leave at the shop/cafe or with another person that gave their proposed cycle route, departure and expected return times plus contact telephone numbers and car registration number. This would mean that in the event of a rider not returning due to an accident etc, search arrangements could be set up quickly. It was agreed Bill investigate the costs of producing these.

#### **13. Moorcock Inn**

Chris said that the new owners of the Moorcock Inn would be very happy to put on appropriate food for a Trailblazers ride, if advised in advance. They would also be happy to publicise the Trailblazers group and it was agreed to look at producing a leaflet publicising Trailblazers. Action: Bill/Vicky/Ollie

#### **14. Stickers and Jerseys**

Marie agreed to investigate the possibility of producing a Trailblazer sticker that could be sent out to all members. Alex advised [www.cyclejersey.com](http://www.cyclejersey.com) might be able to assist in making and selling Trailblazer cycling tops, giving a percentage of the proceeds to the club and Ollie agreed to follow this up.

#### **15. Phase 2**

Alex gave a detailed Powerpoint Presentation on how the FC saw future developments at Kielder, Chopwell and Hamsterley in terms of recreational usage. It was noted cycling featured prominently in these and that the Red Route at Hamsterley was seen as the next major priority for cycle funding bids. Alex also gave details of the monthly Hamsterley Project Meetings involving FC staff. It was noted that FC had arranged a Branding Workshop for Hamsterley on 14 February to which representative of all user groups were invited, including Trailblazers, Descend, Horse Riding Association, Walkers, Woodcraft Folk, Teesdale Council etc. Vicky and Ollie were attending the event on behalf of Trailblazers.

**10. Date and Time of Next Meeting** It was agreed the next meeting be held on Monday 6 Februray at 6.30pm in the Forest Classroom. It was also agreed the March meeting be an informal social one at the Cross Keys Pub, Hamsterley, starting at 7pm.

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