

Minutes of a meeting of Hamsterley Trailblazers held on Monday 6 October 2008 at 6.30pm in the Forest Classroom

Trustees Present: Andy Samanjoul (Chairman)
Ollie Graham (Vice Chairman)
Bill Pike (Treasurer)

Members Present: Marie Brown
Chris Briers
Mat Clark
Gary Ewing
Andrew Frith
Martin Stout

In attendance: Neil Taylor (FC)
Jon Bateman (Go Ride, British Cycling)

Apologies for Absence were received from Ollie Graham, Michael Chilcott, Fiona Simpson, Tracey Wond and Alex Maclennan

1. Minutes of Last Meeting The minutes of the meeting held on 2 June 2008 were approved as a correct record.

2. Matters arising from the Minutes

- **See Saw** - Still broken!!!
- **Lands End to John O Groats** – Bill Pike completed this (in pouring rain) in 13.5 days and members congratulated him on his achievement.
- **Coaching with Nigel Page** – was taking place for 4 days over half term with 2 days for children and 2 days for adults. Sessions were free, but needed to be pre-booked.
- **Signage** – No further action as yet.

3. Statement of Accounts and Membership The Statement of Accounts to end August 2008 was received. Bill reported Trailblazers had 100 main members plus family members at that date. Bill said an uptake in membership was very noticeable after coaching sessions, particularly recent female sessions.

4. Hamsterley Project Development and Red Route Members were updated on the current position regarding the Hamsterley Forest Development and Red Trail. It was noted FC had failed to let the tender for project consultancy on the overall Forest project Business Case and needed to go out to re-tender. This meant work on the Business Case could not now start until 2009. Whilst the Red Trail had already been designed, costed and was ready to go – ONE would not approve any funding until the overall Project Business Case had been approved. This meant we were already out of time on some funding grants and were in danger of losing the CDENT money which needed to be allocated in 2009. Members expressed deep concern that yet again the red trail was being delayed because of problems with the larger Forest development scheme. It was noted, in particular, that £30,000 of Teesdale Council money already allocated to the new trail needed to be spent by end

March 2009. Vicky and Ollie were meeting the Stakeholder Project Steering Group to discuss the matter on 13 October and would press for agreement that the cycle trail start in advance of the rest of the project scheme.

5. Black Route Maintenance It was reported FC had approved £2000 for trail maintenance. Mat was assessing work that could be carried out with the funding.

6. Volunteer Trailbuilding Mat reported a very successful trailbuilding session had been held in September working on drainage and black route maintenance. The next session was on Saturday 18 October.

7. Go Ride Jon Bateman, the new British Cycling Go Ride coach for the north east of England, was welcomed to the meeting. Jon explained he was trying to contact as many cycling organisations as possible in the north east to develop links and explore opportunities for future developments. In particular he was keen to develop mtb racing in the north east, possibly through the Tees Valley School sports partnership. It was noted Trailblazers had applied to start a Go Ride Kids Club and were keen to develop this aspect of cycling as much as possible. Ollie had recently secured £1,000 funding to take children on the C2C during 2009 and hoped to start children's training sessions over the winter months. Andy drew attention to the possibility of taking the club to the children by holding sessions in satellite locations such as Barnard Castle, Darlington, Durham etc as well as Hamsterley. It was also noted that affiliation to British Cycling entitled each club to the benefit of approximately 20 free British Cycling membership places.

8. Website Links Discussion took place on requests frequently being received for website links to various organisations such as shops, holiday companies etc. Andy and Chris offered to research suitable companies that might make a donation for such links (similar to Wiggle) so that this could be discussed further.

9. HTB Email Facility Chris reported that a HTB email facility had been set up on the website (contact@hamsterley-trailblazers.co.uk) Any emails received would automatically be forwarded simultaneously to Vicky and Chris who would ensure that a reply was sent as soon as possible. This meant that the email correspondence load could be shared and more easily dealt with.

10. HTB Promotions Stand Attention was drawn to the need for publicity material in the form of banners and posters for a HTB Promotions Stand that could be used at events etc. Gary said he could produce appropriate pictures and Andy thought Cummins might be able to help with printing. This included a permanent banner or poster for the Forest. (Size to be agreed with Neil in advance.)

11. HTB Event Marquee/Tent The cost of providing a HTB marquee/tent printed with HTB logos had been estimated at £1,000 to £1,600 (approx size 3m x 3m.) It was agreed that approval be given to the purchase subject to investigating whether help could be obtained towards the printing costs in the form of sponsorship from other organisations eg FC, ONE, Groundwork etc.

12. Cycle Clothing Re-ordering of cycle clothing was discussed and Marie agreed to investigate minimum order quantities. Mat suggested getting definite orders from members before placing a bulk order. The possibility of producing other promotional items was also discussed eg mugs, stickers, Christmas cards and it was agreed this was something to consider in the future.

13. Recent HTB Events Members reported on recent HTB events including the Sustrans Cycle Event at MIMA, the Club BBQ, Female Coaching Sessions and the GMSR. The day of the GMSR was one of appalling rain and flooding, but 80 people had still taken part raising around £3000 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

14. Trailblazers 2009 C2C Ride Requests had been received via the Trailblazers web forum for a 2009 C2C Club Ride and it was agreed to investigate a suitable date for this. It was agreed the bike trailer could be used for back up transport.

15. Halloween Event Neil asked for volunteers to help at FC's Hamsterley Forest Halloween event on Sunday 26 October, meeting at 5pm.

14. Date and Time of Next Meeting It was agreed the next meeting be an informal one at the Cross Keys, Hamsterley on Monday 3 November from 7pm.