

Hamsterley Trailblazers

Minutes of a meeting on Thursday 5 March 2015 at 7pm in the Cross Keys Pub, Hamsterley

Present: **Trustees:** Neil Gander (Chairman)
 Emma Graham (Treasurer)
 Olly Graham (Vice Chair)

Members: Matt Clark
 Vicky Chilcott
 James Dods
 Fiona Ewing
 Gary Ewing
 David Holmes
 Geoff Morson
 Shaun Rogers
 Alex Talks
 Andrew Walker

In attendance: Alex MacLennan (FC)

1.Apologies for absence were received from Kathryn Gander, Andy Keaveney, Ian Tate and Lyndsey Talks.

2.Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2015 were approved as a correct record.

3.Matters arising from the minutes:

- **Donation Box** Neil Gander to source one for café.
- **Motor Bikes** Signs warning against using motor bikes on trails had gone up in forest and Alex MacLennan had met community police to discuss problem.

4.Report from Alex MacLennan - Alex gave a big thanks to everyone for all the work carried out last year on the Northern Lands project. He said work on the

toilet block was due to finish in 3 weeks and the Woodcraft building would be taken down in June. Car parking charges had been increased to £4.50 per day or £1.50 for short stay. There was no price increase for the Discovery Pass (£40 pa.) Alex said no further funding was available at present for trails but that work on planning the blue route would take place for when funds became available, although planning permission needed to be submitted for this after an ecology report had been done. He said some complaints had been received (including ones via Helen Goodman MP) from horse-riders and walkers about the amount of money being spent on mtb trails to which he had replied that if those groups also wished to fund raise, like Trailblazers, and volunteer to build trails, they could have specific horse-riding or walking trails. It was **AGREED** Neil Gander write to Helen Goodman making a plea for more support and understanding towards mountain biking which was now responsible for bringing many more visitors and tourists to the forest and the area.

5. Financial Report Emma said HTB's remaining £10k contribution to FC for its share of the Northern Lands project had been paid. Other payments including the British Cycling affiliation fee (which included HTB public liability insurance) and the cost of 2 coaching courses at £40 each. This left a balance of £1,100 in club funds.

6. Trailbuilding and Future Plans Olly thanked James Dods (HTB) and Martin Nevastu (FC) for all their sterling efforts in trailbuilding over the past months. A good trailbuilding session had been held in February on the new section, 'Two Wheels and a Troll.' In March repair work on 'Section 13' was planned; in April and May – work on 'Boneshaker'. Some repair work would also be needed this year to 'Transmission' and 'Special K.' Then plans were needed for new sections. A very productive trailbuilding week had been organised by Alex Talks bringing in some 100 students from New College Durham and it was **AGREED** Neil Gander send a letter of thanks to the College. It was hoped more student sessions could be organised this year.

7. Coaching Olly reported some funding was available for the British Cycling Level 2 Coaching Course and interest had been expressed by Andy Keaveney and Rachel Martin in doing this. Children's coaching sessions

continued to be very well attended and popular. There had been some discussion by British Cycling re funding mtb facilities – if so it was hoped a bid could be made for Blue route funding or a Pump Track (but it was also noted BC's priority always seemed to be road cycling.)

8. Calendar of Events

- **Opening of Oddsox** (to be agreed with Beamish Oddsox who had donated final funding)
- **AGM – Thus 16 April at 6.30pm, Village Hall.** To include mtb film (Olly)
- **Hamsterley Beast – Sat 9 May** – in aid of Great North Air Ambulance
- **North East XC MTB Race – 1st Series at Hamsterley – Sun 10 May** (Dan) Marshalls needed!
- **Reeth Weekend Away – 27 & 28 June** – Mat and Emma Clark, who are leaving to live in New Zealand shortly, invited members of Trailblazers to join them at the Dales Bike Centre in Reeth for a camping weekend and BBQ with a club ride on Sunday 28 June led by David Holmes. The best wishes of all from Trailblazers was given to Mat, Emma and family, who would be greatly missed.
- **Enduro Race** – It was noted British Cycling had stopped providing insurance for these races but Mat had found alternative insurance through Cyclesure at c £0.60 per rider which could make the event profitable if a charge of £40 per rider was made. A suggestion that the first 80 riders were offered a 15% discount was felt to be a good idea.

9. Other Matters

- Gary Ewing invited everyone to the opening of his new bike shop in Bishop Auckland on Saturday 7 March when tea and cakes would be served followed by a bike ride.
- It was noted Andrew Walker was standing down from the Committee at the AGM for work reasons.
- Olly reported that the Charity Commissioners now had in place the document needed for charities to become Charitable Incorporated Organisations and it was **AGREED** Olly progress this matter for Trailblazers.

- It was noted Trailblazers' long standing and much appreciated member, Kaye Graham, was seriously ill and the best wishes of all members was sent to her and her family.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting
in Hamsterley Village Hall.

AMG Thursday 16 April at 6.30pm