

ASHFORD WALKING AND CYCLING FORUM

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 21st April 2010
in the Crothall Room, St Mary's Church, Ashford

Present: Jonathan Beare (in the Chair); Emily Neighbour (taking minutes) Central Ashford Community Forum; Liz Wedgwood, Kent County Council Transport Planner; Christine Green, CACF and Town Centre Partnership; Greg Williams, Spokes; Spencer Morgan, Cycle Trainer; John Wellard, Ramblers Association and cyclist; Colin Cresser, cyclist.

Apologies: Ted Prangnell, Ashford Cycling Touring Club, Roadpeace, Living Streets, Stephen Bourner, Ashford's Future; Steve Fawke, Spokes.

Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 2nd February: these were approved. Thanks to Spencer Morgan for standing in for Emily.

Chairman: Jonathan Beare pointed out that he had been chairing the meeting for a over year and would be happy to pass the role on to another as he was aware that he could not always put as much time into it as he would as he feels the position could do with. Any volunteers?

Winter Maintenance: a new Winter Policy had been drafted by Kent Highways in response to the extreme conditions over the last winter. This would be circulated to all members. The following is the main mention of footways and cycle routes:

Snow Clearance Priorities on Footways

6.3.1 *Snow clearance on footways should be based on the priorities given below:*

- *One footway in and around shopping centres, and on routes to schools (in term time), stations, bus stops, hospitals, medical centres, doctor's surgeries, old people's homes, industrial and commercial centres and on steep gradients elsewhere;*
- *One footway on main arteries in residential areas and the second footway in and around local shopping centres;*
- *With the approval of Community Delivery Managers, other footways, walking bus routes and cycleways as resources permit.*

It might be appropriate to write and comment on this as it seemed to regards cycleways as very far down the list of priorities as compared to roads. The Secretary and Chair would confer on this. Please send any comments to them.

Vegetation overgrowing cycle paths: work had been done to clear these over the winter months. LW reported that Ashford would be used as a trial for two scheduled cuts per summer which should be an improvement. The system before had completely omitted some areas from regular cutting which then relied on reports of problem areas being made by the public.

Willesborough Dykes cycle path: the application to install this route from Park Farm to Asda was being considered at the Ashford Borough Council Planning Committee the following Wednesday. Emily Neighbour suggested a representative of ACWF should speak in support of the project. She offered to speak. She was asked to suggest appropriate times that the lights should be on (when dark until 11pm then on again at 5am), and suggest that motion sensitive lighting might be appropriate at less busy times. [ABC then proposed to remove the lighting scheme all together, presumably as a cost-saving measure. She would speak in favour of lighting, and if unsuccessful request luminous paint or cat's eyes equivalents.]

Pilgrim's Hospice Ride: this would be going ahead on 9th May. ACWF would have a stall along with Spokes at the start in Victoria Park with the aim of publicising its existence and getting people

to sign up to the mailing list. Any members would be welcome to come along and help man the stall with Christine Green. Colin Cressor has drafted a poster. Christine Green to send details of Leaflet distribution license to LW and SM.

For more details of the ride visit the website: <http://www.pilgrimscyclechallenge.org/>

Learning Link: LW reported that she had extended this proposed route to Henwood to the north and Stanhope to the south. She was seeking funding for this.

Route 18: the improvements to the stretch outside Premier Foods (previously Batchelors) and the Blackwall Road sections were still being pursued. LW hoped she had got permission to remove the wall outside Premier Foods so that the cycle path could join up on that side of the road.

Cycle Strategy: the consultation period was nearing the closing date. EN asked why it had not been sent out to parish councils for consultation. LW said it was meant more for the town centre. It was pointed out that people from the villages cycled into town and some of the butterfly routes would extend into the villages. EN would e-mail the link out to the parish clerks using her own mailing list. She also asked what the draft butterfly routes would be used for as they did not currently use the safest existing routes. LW replied that it was only a draft which acted as starting point – it would not be published in its current form except in the strategy. In due course members of ACWF would be asked for their input to improve the proposed routes.

Active Ashford Cycle Challenge: Spencer Morgan reported that he was being employed by the Cycling Touring Club, Ashford Borough Council and the Primary Care Trust to encourage cycling over the next two years. He would be visiting businesses and encouraging workers to try cycling to encourage them to cycle to work. There would be a website *Active Ashford* which would give them support and encouragement. Other help would be provided in the form of cycle checks, teaching routes and cycle training.

ACWF congratulate Spencer and are supportive of his new role.

Jamie Staff: it was agreed that it would be helpful to get the support of Jamie Staff, the Olympic gold medal cyclist who lives in Park Farm. It was agreed to write a letter to him via his website.

Station forecourt improvements: these had been publicised and would be going for planning permission soon. ACWF had not had an opportunity to comment before. EN would circulate the details when she was informed it was coming to committee. There were some concerns that there was a long walk from the dropping off point in the car park and to the taxi rank.

Meeting closed: 8.35 pm

Next meetings all to be confirmed: Tuesday 22 June, Tuesday 7 September, Tuesday 9 November