

North Lancashire Bridleway Society

Minutes of general meeting held on 8 March 2022

1. **Welcome and new members:** Eve welcomed everyone to the meeting and new member Jane Lock.
2. **Apologies:** Denise Woodcock, Kate Lennox, Lesley Owen, Sheena Robertson, Helen Wilkinson, Ailsa Gibson, Sarah Fulwood
3. **Minutes of Last Meeting:** were confirmed as a true and accurate record. Proposed: Bridget Pickthall, seconded. Diane Richmond
4. **Matters Arising:** none
5. **Bridleway News –**

- (i) *2026 to be repealed* – the following update has been received from Ailsa:

It basically means that Defra has said they intend to drop the deadline of 2026 being the final time that applications could be made to modify the Definitive Map. This means that we should be able to continue to submit applications beyond then to have routes recorded correctly as BWs or byways etc where they currently are not shown.

At the moment there are 107 applications for BWs or higher status routes that we know of in the queue to be assessed by Lancashire County Council. A good chunk of these are in North Lancashire and have been done by Di Brooksbank who has been an amazing volunteer for us. She is currently helping out in Cumbria but will still do some Lancashire ones as well. A number of these have already been agreed and Orders been made. Including recently a short stretch in Yealand Conyers, the route through Lords Lot Wood, the lane between Capernwray and Borwick.

The applications aren't necessarily dealt with by Lancashire County Council in the order they are submitted, and it will take a long while to get through them all. Also, some have gone to appeal with the Planning Inspectorate due to LCC approving them, but other parties objecting, and the queue for a decision from the Planning Inspectorate is years long (we are still waiting on the Thwaite Brow / Mount Pleasant decision from 2015).

Recently Green Hill Lane's application was not approved by Lancashire County Council, who felt from the historical evidence that it was only ever meant as an Occupation Road, for use of people farming the fields either side. However, the councillors who took the decision appreciated the potential usefulness of the route and asked council officers to look into the possibility of creating a BW there. Thank you to everybody who has written in to support it. The chances are low for many reasons, including legal challenges from the neighbouring landowner, but it has been good to show the Council how much demand there is for safe off-road riding routes.

So - please still get involved. The deadline of 2026 has dropped, but nothing else has changed. If a route should be a BW and is only shown as a footpath now, or not marked at all, then it won't magically change by itself. We just have longer now to make the applications.

If you would like to find out more about making an application for a route you know please let us know email: secretary@nlbs.org.uk. We can provide examples of ones already submitted and help you or can let you know if it's already being looked at by somebody else.

- (ii) *Development at Woodhouse Farm, Hincaster* – this may present an opportunity to link up with Hincaster Trailway. NLBS actively support this possibility.
- (iii) *Blackpool Moss* – the construction of M55 link road is underway (due to open 2023) and the old moss roads have been closed to traffic, pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. There are promises that the routes affected will re-open with improvements although there appears to be no details of exactly what is planned. Several bridleways are affected, and no alternative routes have been made available whilst the construction is underway. It is imperative that the existing rights of way are not lost. A local member has written to her MP to highlight the situation and ensure horse riders are considered.

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- (iv) *Preston Guild Wheel* – a 22 mile route which encircles Preston, passing docklands, parks and nature reserves. The only provision for horse riders is on existing bridleways which only form isolated parts of the route and do not link up. There was a brief discussion how more of the route could be made accessible to horse riders and ensure the existing BWs are not compromised.
 - (v) *Gates on Caton Moor* – there a couple of gates which need repair. These have been logged on the LCC site.
- 6. Future of the NLBS** – thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help, the future of the Society is now looking more optimistic. Please come along to the AGM on 10 May when a new Chair, Secretary and Treasurer will be elected.
- 7. Any other business**
- (i) *Possible meal out* – it is hoped to arrange a meal out towards the end of May.
 - (ii) *New Facebook Group* – Ride Lakes, Dales and Morecambe Bay. A multi user advocacy group to promote and improve access for all, whether on foot, wheel, hoof or paddle. This is a public group.

*Speaker: David Wilson
Clean-A-Bean, equine genital hygiene service
Facebook/clean-a-bean*

AGM and general meeting: Tuesday, 10 May 2022

Hest Bank Memorial Hall, Hest Bank LA2 6JB

Please come along and bring a friend