

### **Committee matters**

It has been a disappointing year for our Bridleways Association mainly due to the difficulties in convening committee meetings and communicating with our members. The committee met on just two occasions, in February and July. Unfortunately the committee has now dwindled to just 6 members and our Constitution requires a quorum of 5 to attend formal meetings. For this reason we had to cancel 2 meetings at short notice because the required number could not attend. This is frustrating and means we are not keeping on top of things.

No one on the committee was prepared to undertake the responsibilities of Treasurer, so after some discussion it was agreed we would pay a small fee to someone who would keep our accounts and financial affairs in good order. I am pleased to welcome Nicola Wigley as our new Treasurer. Nicola is not on the committee and works on a freelance basis for WS&EBA.

We still need a Secretary and also a Web person to update our communications on line with our members. These are not onerous tasks and offers of help would be much appreciated so please do consider putting yourself forward, don't be shy! We are all busy people but giving up a little of your time to help support your Bridleways group is a small but significant request.

Two newsletters have been sent out in the past year to try and keep our members informed about various matters including Rights of Way issues.

### **Membership**

Please do remember to renew your membership this evening. Our special offer is a 5 year membership for a four year subscription. So for £20 tonight that will make you a member until 2016!

### **ROW Matters**

ENPA is making good progress in addressing 'off line' issues. Currently there are 264 paths where the definitive line is not available but often an alternative is available. 88 such paths have already been resolved.

#### **Permitted Paths**

Blindwell Lane, Old Cleeve This old lane has been opened up with permission from the relevant landowners for equestrian and cyclists use.

Dean Wood, Parracombe. Proposed permitted bridleway to improve access in this area along the existing public footpath. Difficulties in identifying landowners.

Kennisham Hill permitted path to the east to take horses off the road. Unfortunately SCC has informed ENPA that the road does not comply with their criteria for creating a new route and therefore this proposal is currently on hold.

#### **Diversions**

Nethercote Ford, Winsford : Diversion to bridleway now completed . New path approx. 20 yards from previous Definitve line: New footbridge erected.

Kendle Farm, Exton: Proposed diversion to avoid existing and new farm buildings.

Blagdon Woods, Cutcombe: Part of this bridleway has been closed due to undercutting by river erosion. Substantial and costly repairs are now required. An option may be to divert the bridleway on to a different route.

Stone Lane (Restricted Byway), Exford : Further surface works have been undertaken here by ENPA on the request of the SCC .

Yealscombe Lane, (Restricted Byway) Exford: Surface and drainage works have been carried out by ENPA at the request of SCC.

Kings Brompton, Brompton Regis: Proposed diversion - objection received and this case has now been referred to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration and a hearing will be held.

Wheal Eliza / Cow Castle, Exmoor: The current path in use for a short section over gabions beside the river is a permitted path, not the Definitve line which is unuseable (and always has been!) by horses due to rocky outcrops and mining adits. ENPA is currently in discussion with SCC as to how to resolve this problem. The latter are insisting that safety barriers are erected before this section can become the Definitve path. Understandably ENPA are extremely concerned about intrusive barriers in a unspoilt and beautiful moorland setting.

Bere Farm, Brushford: This issue is outside the ENPA boundaries . A local landowner has challenged the status of this bridleway and lodged a Modification Application with SCC. Good historical evidence was presented to the Regulations meeting in June and a decision was made that this path was a public bridleway. Subsequently the applicant has appealed against this decision and the matter has now been referred to the Planning Inspectorate who will decided whether the appeal is upheld or dismissed. The appeal was very disappointing news but reinforces the need for local Bridleway Associations , who together with the British Horse Society will vigorously contest such claims.