



Harwell Bicycle Users Group (HarBUG)
Annual General Meeting 2014

12:30 Wednesday 24th September 2014
Diamond House (Room G53)

Minutes

Attendees

C Colborne, A Collings, J Greenhalgh, M Hillman, S James, I Roberts, G Smith, A Watkins, G Wilkin (Secretary), K Wilkinson (Chair).

1. Report from Treasurer – J Greenhalgh

A summary of this year's accounts was circulated, and is **appended below**.

Last year HarBUG had only £60 at year-end. HarBUG now has approximately £2k, but this is due solely to one donation from STFC – which to some extent was fortuitous. Other income is limited to three individuals making small voluntary subscriptions.

The STFC money comes with conditions. It should not be used - for example - for catering, the provision of tools, or for repairing potholes. Examples of acceptable use include signage, or training. But STFC may not wish to make further contributions. Furthermore, some of HarBUG's activities may not be to STFC's 'liking'. This particularly applies where HarBUG wishes to comment on planning applications – which has already been an issue with one development on Campus. There was general agreement that HarBUG must be free to make such comment. Campus authorities may find it helpful in this context if HarBUG are advised prior to planning applications being submitted.

A major expense can be the provision of breakfasts on Cycle-to-Work days. On the other hand, we used to ask for fixed sponsorship for breakfasts, and typically under-spent, leaving a profit! How important are the breakfasts? It was generally agreed that we wanted to continue. Perhaps only one breakfast per year? It was pointed out that we are actually generally successful in getting these paid for. Other expenses include website hosting, etc.

Overall, the current funding situation is not sustainable. Previous attempts to get Campus organisations to contribute failed, or were declined. The proposed solution is to seek membership

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subscriptions. It was asked if there could be a mechanism for online subs. Membership subs could encourage 'match-funding'. It was agreed this matter should be put to the vote.

Motion: HarBUG to seek membership contributions. Proposed J Greenhalgh. Seconded G Wilkin. No objections – Motion carried.

Query about web expenses (approx £60) not on accounts.

2. Report from Chair – K Wilkinson

Refer to presentation slides **appended below**.

- ***Consultations***

HarBUG has visited a number of development exhibitions over the year, and commented on the proposals. Oxfordshire County Council has been contacted regarding 'joined-up thinking'.

Now the County Council is preparing a Cycling Strategy document for Science Vale. This will be part of the 4th Local Transport Plan (LTP4). There will also be an Oxfordshire Cycling Strategy.

More specifically, the Winnaway upgrade will begin in Spring 2015 (and has to be complete by March 2016). HarBUG's comments on the proposed Chilton Slips works have not been acted-on. It was suggested that a 'Vulnerable Road User audit' may help. However, Chilton village have objected – so the matter is now going to public enquiry. (**Post Meeting Note: Chilton village have withdrawn their objection, so the new works will go ahead.*) HarBUG also commented on the proposals for development of Hagbourne Hill, Harwell Link Road, and Featherbed Lane. These have raised several concerns about lack of provision for cyclists. The responses may be viewed via HarBUG website. It was commented that the upgrading of Chilton Slips and the Hagbourne Hill road would justify providing a 'bound' surface (ie tarmac) on Route 544 from the top of Hagbourne Hill to A4185.

- ***Funding***

All infrastructure projects are funded via bids made to central Government. Science Vale is the only local area to get any such funding.

- ***Events***

Over the past year, HarBUG ran two successful Cycle-to-Work days. The second of these (during 'Bike Week') was re-branded as a Cycling Festival, and included demonstrations of a Brompton dock, a chance to try out some electric bicycles, and a return visit by the popular 'Dr Bike' repair service. It is already planned to install a Brompton dock at Campus, to complement the one already installed at Didcot Parkway. People are already asking about future Dr Bike visits, when bikes can be left for repair during the day.

- ***'Let's Get Visible'***

About this time last year, HarBUG ran a 'Let's Get Visible' campaign, to encourage the use of proper cycle-lighting, hi-viz clothing, etc after dark.

- ***Didcot 'Good & Bad'***

Examples of good & bad recent cycling infrastructure installations were shown – the cycle parking at Didcot Parkway Station (good), and the cycle path alongside Harwell Road in Didcot (bad). The new path instructs cyclists to dismount no less than seven times in the space of a few hundred yards!

- ***Future Infrastructure***

A couple of examples of 'cycle-friendly' roundabouts were shown.

3. Election

The following were re-elected unopposed:

Chair - K Wilkinson (proposed G Wilkin, seconded S James), Treasurer – J Greenhalgh (proposed S James, seconded G Wilkin), Secretary – G Wilkin (proposed K Wilkinson, seconded M Hillman), Committee Members – A Collings, S James, I Roberts.

4. Discussion - Infrastructure Issues

- ***Funding***

It was asked what the timescales were for the announced funding. The £1m from the Local Sustainable Transport Funding (LSTF) has to be spent in the financial year 2015-16 (ie from April). This is for improving the surface of the short, but defective, section of Route 544 just west of the Campus (ie towards Wantage). Importantly, the £1m also includes funding for maintenance. The timescales for the major £4.9m spend on route developments are not known.

- ***Infrastructure Development***

It was asked if HarBUG would support development of Coffin Way (between Upton and Blewbury) as a cycle route. HarBUG can certainly do that, but the County Council are prioritising links between residential and employment areas, so it would need to be justified as a link from Blewbury onto Route 544 (connecting with Harwell Campus, Didcot, and Milton Park). A similar request has been made for a route between Long Wittenham and Clifton Hampden, across the Thames. This would need to be justified as part of a route to Culham Science Park from the south - and would include a river crossing! It was observed that prioritising commuter routes could mean other routes with safety/environment issues are not addressed.

In response to a query about the 2015 Winnaway works, it was confirmed that the upgraded path will extend right up to the A4185 pelican crossing.

- ***Planning Applications***

HarBUG would like to be made aware if anyone spots new planning applications, so that there is a chance to consider commenting. HarBUG has also written to the District Council (White Horse)

regarding planning applications and the benefits of 'joined-up thinking'! There is a new cycling officer at White Horse DC, with whom HarBUG looks forward to working.

5. Discussion - HarBUG Issues

• ***HarBUG Priorities***

It was asked if HarBUG should continue looking at possibility of providing cycle training?

HarBUG notes the continuing inequality between men and women taking-up cycling. It was observed that Safety is normally given as a main reason discouraging women from cycling.

There was general consensus that the 'Dr Bike' repair service was popular. Furthermore, Dr Bike is 'low risk' to HarBUG.

It was asked if HarBUG should consider running a 'Bike-to-Work' day in September, to tie-in with a recently promoted National Cycle-to-Work day. It was felt that the two such days (April & June) currently run were enough to organise.

There is now an 'Oxfordshire Cycle Network' – this is an attempt to better coordinate the activities of organisations such as HarBUG, also Cyclox (Oxford city), various CTC (Cyclists' Touring Club) branches, and others. It was asked if Farcycles (Faringdon) was included. A main focus of this Network is to more effectively lobby the County Council on cycling matters.

• ***HarBUG Membership***

HarBUG's membership (currently around 170) is defined as those who have a 'HarBUG login', ie who have registered on website. It was suggested that there are many potential members who look at the website, but do not register – meaning among other things that they don't receive e-mail alerts when there are new posts on website, eg notice of AGM!

More potential members could come from HPA following a re-organisation which brought more of their people onto Campus.

It is difficult to make people aware of HarBUG when there are not obvious routes of communication into some Campus organisations. A suggestion was to get HarBUG mentioned in inductions for new starters.

• ***Campus***

HarBUG's relationship with Campus authorities was discussed. It was felt that this had become less close with a new management team in place; we need to 'grow' the relationship. A suggestion would be to invite the Campus authorities to a meeting. HarBUG could brief them about our work with County Council, and our responses to planning applications, etc.

G Wilkin

25th September 2014

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Appendix 1 – Summary of HarBUG Accounts to 3 Sep 2014

THIS YEAR

Opening balance **£61.10**

income

Monthly subs, 12 months at 4.00 £48.00

Yearly subs, 1 payment of 5.00 £5.00

contribution from STFC £3,000.00

total income **£3,053.00**

expenditure

Bike repair man (Jun 2014) £288.00 *

new signage (July 2014) £504.53

Elior breakfasts (July 2014) £268.80 *

HLRA pavilion hire (Jun 2014) £20.00

total expenditure **£1,081.33**

Closing balance 3 sep 2014 **£2,032.77**

* ISSUE: STFC did not want to pay for lunches (or bike doctor?)

There are two outstanding items not yet claimed

second pavilion hire £20.00

shutterstock images £34.80

LAST YEAR FOR REFERENCE

Opening balance **£609.26**

income

Monthly subs, 13 months at 4.00 *£52.00*

Yearly subs, 1 payment of 5.00 *£5.00*

£57.00

expenditure

web expenses mar 2013 *£65.96*

HLRA pavilion hire april 2013 *£20.00*

Elior Jun 2013 payment for April cycle to work *249.6*

HLRA pavilion hire June 2013 *£20.00*

Cheque for Elior for Jun 2012 *£249.60*

£605.16

Closing balance (3 Sep 2013) **£61.10**

Appendix 2 – Slides Presented at AGM

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Consultations

- i Wantage Crab Hill.
- i Didcot Station Square.
- i Didcot North East.
- i Winnaway Upgrade.
- i Chilton Slips.
- i Hagbourne Hill & Harwell Bypass.
- i Featherbed Lane.
- i LTP4 Initial Response

Funding

- i £4.9m from Local Growth Fund / Oxon LEP.
- i £1m from Local Sustainable Transport Fund.
- i HarBUG wrote letter of support for the bid.
- i LSTF to fund:
 - Fixing route to west of Campus.
 - Feasibility for Wantage to Milton Park Campus.
 - Cycle network scheme development.
 - Cycle network signage and branding.
 - Other non-cycling projects.

Events

- i Cycling Festival – Bike to Work Day.



Events

i Cycling Festival – Brompton Dock.



Events

i Cycling Festival – Electric Bike Try Out.



Events

i Cycling Festival – Dr. Bike / Cycle Repairs.



Let's Get Visible



Didcot – Good & Bad



Future Infrastructure?

