

Trailway News March 2016



Old Railway Bridge at Stur

Here is a long awaited News Letter with some of the events effecting the Trailway.

The problems of planning a route between Sturminster Newton and Stalbridge.

The development of 350 houses on St. Mary's Hill on A350 and A354

the developments at Shillingstone Station

Signage

The Sturminster- Stalbridge connection

Graham Stanley, Giles Nicholson and Sturminster Newton Town Council have produced four possible routes from Sturminster to Stalbridge. The picture above illustrates the problem of crossing the river. Besides the river crossing there is the problem of converting foot paths to a bridleway and making the track accessible to cyclists and horses. This seems to be a problem we come back to time and time again. Part of the problem is money and part of the problem is landowners and their attitude to the Trailway and finally part of the problem is lack of manpower to get things done. North Dorset is not seen as a tourist destination by DCC so County finance to develop tourist attractions tends to go to the coast.

A350 development

If you have seen plans for the development of St. Marys Hill on the land near the Tesco Roundabout you will see that a toucan crossing is suggested as a way for people to cross the A354 to get to the new development and access the Trailway. I am concerned that children on bicycles, horses and mobility scooters would find this frightening and not at all safe. A bridge or an underpass would be safer as these groups of Trailway users would not then be caught in the middle of a traffic junction with heavy traffic in all directions. I am delighted that a little stretch of Trailway will at last connect Blandford to Charlton Marshall and Spetisbury.

Developments at Shillingstone Station

To commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the closing of the S&D Railway the Railway Trust is having a steam up at Shillingstone station on 5th March. The Railway Trust is supposed to be putting in a request for planning permission to re-direct the Trailway below the station platform and then return it to its current course on the other side of the platform without infringing the flood plain. There has been a great deal of tree work and brush cutting done without

any application so far. We are keen to see that the arrangements for the redirection of the Trailway are done in good order and we do not want to suddenly find that the Trailway is blocked by Railway Trust activity with no notice or advice.

Signage

DT11 are raising the profile of the Trailway and have applied to DCC for a brown Tourist sign to be placed on the A354 advertising all the attractions in Blandford. Considering that about 150,000 people use the Trailway each year it is indeed a tourist attraction especially for families with children and bicycles.

Lesley Gasson
Trailway Chair Person