

Bridleway 413 Restored



In December 2012, the resurfacing of this Bridleway on Sheets Heath, Brookwood was completed. Successful fundraising over the last four years has enabled the WDBA to fund this project to the tune of nearly £7,000.

It was a challenge from the start — the Bridleway fell foul of changes to the law for maintaining public rights of way at public expense, as the land was unregistered the owner was untraceable, and the site itself was exceptionally wet, crossed by numerous utility pipes and dissected by a stream. We applied for funding from several grant schemes, including the Lottery, but each were declined, leaving us with no option but to fund the work ourselves.

Our groundworks contractor, [Poulsom](#), rose to the challenge, and has created a network of drainage channels, cleared the debris and resurfaced over 100 metres of the Bridleway.

Riders, walkers and cyclists are already enjoying using the restored Bridleway to access Sheets Heath, Stafford Lake, Pirbright and Ash Ranges, and Chobham Common.



Chairman's News

Welcome to 2013. We trust you had a fabulous Christmas and a great start to the New Year.

We say goodbye to 2012 with many wonderful memories of the Olympics and Jubilee celebrations, and closer to home, the horses and humans who enjoyed WDBA events.

It was also a great year for bridleway improvements, with major work completed on Bridleway 413 on Sheets Heath and approval from Surrey County Council to commence the resurfacing of Bridleway 423 on Rickford Common in 2013.

The WDBA committee has been busy preparing fundraising events and projects for this year and we hope you and your friends will support us.

Watch out for the popular Fit or Fat Ride, Pleasure Ride and fun Dressage event. Members will also be invited to smaller clinics and talks, details of which will appear on the events page of our website as soon as dates are confirmed.

This year, we're launching a "Member's Points League". Members can accrue points and win prizes by entering events, helping to improve bridleways or stewarding at events. More details to come.

Although we can't do much about the weather, we wish you a happy and healthy 2013 and look forward to seeing you soon in the lovely spring sunshine.

Lisa Wright



Member's Benefits



Animal & Pet Food • Tack Shop • Country Store

5% discount for WDBA members



10% discount for WDBA members
Contact Malcolm on 01483 232324

Your Committee

Chairman: Lisa Wright 07776 301845
Treasurer: Jane Martin 07917 802124
Secretary: Marian Sage 01483 811778

Executive Members: Sarah Ainley, Jill Green, Jo Haward, Tracey Smale, Philippa Wright

Membership Secretary: Stef Roulet (01252 673036)

Area Representatives:

Normandy Linda Pike 01483 811891
Wood Street Wendy Ford 01483 236123

Pirbright Judy Williams judywilliamsdd@hotmail.com
Whitmoor Caroline Diliberto 07799 826938

Contact your Committee or Area Representative on wdba1992@msn.com or use the phone numbers listed above

New Faces on the Committee



Jane Martin, Treasurer

Jane has a working knowledge of book keeping, and wants to share this experience and support the WDBA. Horses have taken her from one side of the globe to the other and she currently has an Australian ex-racehorse who she wouldn't swap for the world.



Stef Roulet, Membership Secretary

Stef treasures her access to off-road hacking, and supporting the WDBA and its goals is extremely important to her. Stef acquired her dream horse, a Paso Fino, aged 17.

WDBA 2013 Calendar Now Half Price

A4 calendar with 12 gorgeous photos of local flora, fauna and landscapes to take you through the year. Plenty of space to capture essential appointments.

Available for £3.50 (plus postage) while stocks last.

We can deliver to your door, if you're not too far away.

Order your calendar by contacting Marian on 01483 811778, or wdba1992@msn.com



Normandy – Linda Pike (01483 811891)

The Normandy/Ash area is lucky to have fairly well surfaced bridleways, although this extreme and constant wet weather is proving to be a real trial. To my knowledge all paths are passable and most are still riding very well.

Those with riding permits for **Ash and Pirbright Ranges** are finding that even the famous Bagshot Sand has a saturation limit and there are many puddles to negotiate. Landmarc Support Services have confirmed that the barrier across the step-over stile at **Henley Park Firing Range** is temporary and will be replaced with an equestrian gate. They also say that the faulty catch on the wooden equestrian gate next to the cattle grid at **Stoney Castle Firing Range** will be repaired soon.

At the **Tongham** end of our area, riders from Badshot Lea have formed a new BHS-affiliated bridleways group, and have worked with Surrey and Hampshire county councils to create a bridleway along the footpath at The Moors, Tongham. See full report on page 6.

Ash and Pirbright Ranges: *Horse riders require a permit to ride on the Ranges. For more information, contact Landmarc Support Services Ltd, HQ ATE, Longmoor Camp, Liss, Hants, GU33 6EL. Email: oliver.james@landmarc.mod.uk*

Whitmoor – Caroline Diliberto (07799 826938)

Whitmoor Common has its fair share of puddles and mud, however, it's still rideable and firm under foot. Of course, we do have the advantage of plenty of WDBA-surfaced PHRs.

Bridleway 423 on Rickford Common — due to the weather conditions, the resurfacing of this Bridleway has been delayed until the spring.

Last year, Mark Havlar from Surrey Wildlife Trust (SWT) had planned to replace the bridge on the **Summer Ride** and resurface part of the track leading to it. However, at our AGM in November, he reported changes to SWT's funding would mean that he would need to reapply for the funds for this work and was unable to give us any firm dates. A WDBA member suggested that Mark investigate if British Rail would consider clearing its ditches that run parallel to the Summer Ride, as this would improve the area's poor drainage.

Wood Street – Wendy Ford (01483 236123)

My recent election as Wood Street area rep. allows me to concentrate on the routes around where I live in Bailes Lane. Although I know many of the routes well, I'd like to ensure that we don't lose lesser-known ones for the future.

For instance, do you know of a route that does not appear on the local Ordnance Survey map? If you do, we must inform the council so it includes it on its definitive map of rights of way, otherwise we risk losing it.

It's estimated that at least five routes in every parish need reclaiming for riders, and we have until 2026 to define their status and record them or lose them forever.

Right to ride on the track leading to

Passengers Farm from Bailes Lane — This track is not privately owned, despite what the signage says. Instead, it's part of Broadstreet Common, which is subject to a public right of "air and exercise" under Section 193 of the Law of Property Act 1925. Following the decision of the High Court in *R v Secretary of State ex parte Billson*, it is established that the right of "air and exercise" includes the right to ride a horse.

Therefore, horse riders have a right to use this track over Broadstreet Common. Let me know of any similar tracks in the Wood Street area generally considered as "private access", but which might also fit into this category.

Pirbright – Judy Williams

judywilliamsdd@hotmail.com

Bridleway 413 which links Sheets Heath with Stafford Lake, has now been resurfaced using WDBA funds. See full report on page 1.

The Pirbright Heathland Restoration Scheme.

This has gone very quiet — I believe that funds are not available to carry out the restoration at present. This means that there are no restrictions on riding on the area.

Brookwood Farm Country Park. The huge development proposed here, and adjoining Country Park, are on hold while issues over a nearby Site of Special Scientific Interest and Special Protection Area are resolved.

2013 Diary Dates

- Sun Feb 24 Track Clearance
- Sun April 7 Fit or Fat Ride, Elstead
- Sun Sept 1 Pleasure Ride, Wood Street
- Sun Sept 29 Open Unaffiliated Dressage, Merrist Wood
- October* Track Clearance
- Mon Nov 18 AGM, Lord Pirbright's Hall, Pirbright

Visit www.wdba.org.uk/events for confirmed dates and entry forms.

* Date to be confirmed



WDBA Online



For the latest news on bridleways and events visit www.wdba.org.uk

Find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wdba.org.uk)



Events You Don't Want to Miss!

Track Clearance — Does a track near you need some TLC? If you have a path in mind and/or would be interested in joining a track clearance working party during February, or would like more details on what's involved, contact Philippa Wright on wdba1992@msn.com.

Fit or Fat Ride — This popular 10-mile ride returns to Elstead, and includes some fantastic riding. Trot up and heart rate check makes this a great early season starter for anyone wanting to know how fit (or not!) their horse is. Alternatively, simply enjoy the stunning Surrey countryside! Date to be confirmed, entry forms available from our website by the beginning of February.

The Pleasure Ride at Wood Street on 1 September is an 11-mile ride that includes the farmland and woods leading up to the Hogs Back. We hope to see you and your friends there. Entry forms available from our website during July.

Dressage — Why not give dressage a go? There will be the same mix of classes as last year – Walk and Trot, Prelim, and Novice – with the same friendly and fun atmosphere. If you'd like to try dressage, then this is the perfect opportunity. Entry forms available from our website during July.

A Golden Year for the WDBA

2012 was a year to remember — the Queen commemorated her Diamond Jubilee, Britain hosted the Olympic Games, where Team GB won loads of bling, and the WDBA celebrated 20 years of successful campaigning and promotion of safe off-road access for riders.

In 2012, the WDBA:

- **Raised £2,500 for resurfacing bridleways and permissive horse rides**
- **Increased its membership to over 100 members**
- **Boosted its profile significantly in the local community**
- **Used Facebook to promote its aims, objectives, achievements and events**
- **Featured in the Surrey Advertiser and Local Rider magazine**
- **Improved the look and feel of its newsletter**
- **Developed its website to include news on bridleways, events, and event results**
- **Raised £124 for the Air Ambulance**

As you can see, we've been busy!

Work off That Christmas Excess



Join our track clearance working party on Sunday, 24 February!

We need you to tell us about tracks that are impassable or difficult to ride. Email me the details and location of the path, preferably with map reference, and you won't have to duck under branches or squeeze through gaps any longer!

Permissive horse rides (PHRs) and bridleways are always under threat, more so now as local councils update their "definitive maps", including PHRs, which, if left undefined, will be lost to riders. One way to ensure a route is retained is to keep it clear and rideable.

Your Committee is working hard to improve surfaces on our bridleways and PHRs. You can help by joining us on 24 February to cut back vegetation and tackle trees that have fallen during the winter.

Our track clearance working parties are fun. We clear what we can, we chat a lot while we do it, and we enjoy tea, coffee and cake. Meeting at 10.30am at the venue, we usually finish around 12.30pm. It's not much time to give up from your weekend, and it makes a huge difference to the paths we ride. All you need is strong gloves, suitable footwear and, if you have them, a pair of secateurs or small saw. (We have tools to share for those that don't have any.)

Put the date in your diary and email me to say you will be there. I'll confirm the meeting point once I've identified which paths we'll be tackling.

Contact Philippa on philippa_wright@hotmail.com or 07774 263568.



New Bridleway in Tongham — Newly Formed Bridleways Group Achieves Great Things

The Blackwater Valley Bridleways Group was formed in December 2011, with the aim of extending and improving the bridleway network to the east and south of Badshot Lea.

Opportunities for riding in this area are restricted by the A331, and the newly formed bridleways group is working to create a bridleway link to the Christmas Pie route in Tongham. The first stage of the project was completed in 2011, when the Group's application to Surrey County Council (SCC) to upgrade Footpath 348 at The Moors, Tongham to a public bridleway was successful. This new bridleway is known as Bridleway 348. Further progress during 2012 saw the Group achieve, with support from the WDBA and BHS Access officer, Bob Milton, SCC's approval to put in a step-over stile on Bridleway 348 at the end of The Moors before the A331 underpass, and this will be installed by SCC shortly. Riders now have an extended route through Tongham onto the Christmas Pie route and beyond.

It's hoped that WDBA members will also benefit from the extended network, as it will open up routes to Runfold, Crooksbury Common and Tilford — a full days hacking!

The Group's next step is to collaborate with SCC, the Blackwater Valley Countryside Trust and Hanson Aggregates, to agree new bridleways through to Badshot Lea.

Membership Update



Happy New Year and good wishes for 2013 from membership secretary, Stef.

Subscriptions are due at the end of March, and without you the WDBA would be unable to do the work that so positively affects us and our enjoyment of the countryside.

I'm delighted to have the opportunity to be the WDBA's membership secretary. I've been pleasantly surprised by the number of members and I hope that we can continue to improve this in 2013.

Remember, membership benefits include:

- **Reduced entry fees to WDBA events**
- **5% discount at Rokers Tack Shop**
- **10% discount at Act Fast Pest Control**

I look forward to being in touch with you in the near future.

WDBA Story in "The Voice of GU3 and GU24"

"The Voice of GU3 and GU24" is an A5 glossy booklet that pops through the letterboxes of all who live in those postcodes. It contains advertisements and news snippets about the area.

Look out for the next one which is due early in 2013 — and don't throw it away. Inside you will find a three-page spread on the WDBA, with photographs, written by our Pirbright representative, Judy Williams. Definitely one to keep.

From the Photo Album WDBA Riding Display at Normandy Village's Diamond Jubilee Fete, June 2012.

