

Brecon & Radnorshire Branch of CPRW have provided the following information to the Montgomeryshire Branch that is relevant to consideration of the amenity of equestrian users of PRowS in the immediate vicinity of the proposed windfarm and to the tourism economy.

Possibly the largest and longest established equestrian business in Mid Wales, Free Rein in Radnorshire, has developed an extensive collection of detailed route descriptions and maps for riders across Powys. The proprietor has stated his intention to curtail or remove routes to the sea if Mynydd y Gwynt and Bryn Blaen go ahead. All routes are rigorously tested, before use by Free Rein and then by clients and staff over the riding season. He was in the process of making this collection of routes and maps publicly available with the aim of helping to publicise the huge asset to Powys that the network of green lanes/bridleways/drove routes provides. Accommodation providers and hostelrys along the way are promoted and these trails can provide a very valuable source of income. In a recent survey of such providers it was found that Free Rein business brought some £150 000 pa into upland Radnorshire alone.

Trans Wales Trails, another equestrian enterprise, state that their highest earning route is that from Pengenfford in the Brecon Beacons National Park to Borth/Ynyslas on the North West Wales coast. This popular long distance trail brings riders from around the world and many repeat visits as it is a tremendous advertisement for the Mid Wales countryside. The Trail passes right through the Sweet Lamb Rally complex and over Plynlimon. Construction of Mynydd y Gwynt would effectively prevent further use of the Trail.

As CPRW and BHS agree, some horses can over time acclimatise to turbines but as the British Horse Society Wind Turbine Experiences Survey (2012) demonstrated there are considerable issues for riders. The results are set out in BHS Advice Document 2013-1¹:

1. Nearly 30% of horses reacted badly to turbines and 22% of riders had difficulty maintaining control
2. Some horses will never become accustomed to turbines
3. Nearly 50% of riders saw the risk as too great and wouldn't ride near turbines.

The implications are clear: many riders would never go into a windfield so would be prevented from enjoying these PRowS; businesses are unable to use or promote rides through windfields given their duty of care to riders (and insurance implications) and, rides are effectively closed to visitors who will not be able to 'acclimatise' a mount who has never experienced turbines. Windfarms thus seriously curtail the right of horse riders to use certain bridleways for riders and this will have an adverse impact on income for the many established equestrian businesses in Powys.

¹Guidelines for Organisers of Affiliated British Horse Society and Technique de Randonnee Equestre Competitions 2013

