



RBWM Local Access Forum Riding & Multi-user Sub Group Rider Survey, March 2020

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Mission Statement

- ▶ To improve safety and minimise risk for equestrians, who are legitimate, vulnerable road users, by expanding the off-road multi-use network and provide safe alternative linkages between PROWs.

Impact of Urbanisation in the Borough

The growth in population and subsequent number of vehicles on the roads around the Borough will further impact the on-road safety of vulnerable users.

Year	Population (1)	Estimated # cars (2)
2001	133541	80,125
2010	143988	86,393
2019	151 422	90,853
2031	156,000	93,600

(1) Source; Public Health for Berkshire 2017

(2) Car ownership rates, RAC Foundation 2012 (605 per 1,000 population)

Multi-use PROW by Parish

Parish	Footpath (km)	Bridleways & Byways (km)	Total km	% access for multi-user
Bisham	13.15	4.75	17.90	27%
Bray	36.80	12.75	49.55	26%
Cookham	34.14	2.85	36.99	8%
Cox Green	8.40	1.40	9.79	14%
Datchet	4.76		4.76	0%
Eton	18.40	3.56	21.96	16%
Horton	1.20	1.25	2.45	51%
Hurley	31.61	13.02	44.63	29%
Maidenhead	29.80	3.04	32.83	9%
Old Windsor	4.57		4.57	0%
Shottesbrooke	3.24	1.61	4.85	33%
Sunningdale	3.55	2.00	5.56	36%
Sunninghill	11.24	4.89	16.14	30%
Waltham SL	17.73	7.21	24.94	29%
White Waltham	11.01	5.04	16.05	31%
Windsor	4.34	3.90	8.24	47%
Wraysbury	9.65		9.65	0%
	243.58	67.28	310.86	22%

- Across the Borough, only 67km out of a total 311km are accessible for horses.
- Cookham is well below the average, having 37km of PROW, but only 8% or 3km are accessible.

Government Initiatives

- ▶ The Agriculture Bill, replacing the CAP, aims to increase public access for recreation through subsidy payments to landowners & farmers.
- ▶ Dept of Transport has acknowledged the issues encountered by horses on roads and confirmed a review of the Highway Code to improve safety for horse riders by implementing specific passing distances and speeds of vehicles. (Appx 5)

Rider Survey

Purpose

- ▶ To gain insights into the current riding experiences within the Borough and make recommendations on how these might be improved. The full survey can be viewed here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-K3P3SNXM7/>.

Methodology

- ▶ An on-line survey was distributed to riding clubs, livery yards, Facebook groups etc, across the Borough.
- ▶ Variety of questions regarding riding habits, on-road and off-road experiences and safety issues, as well as specific questions relating to Cookham and Knowl Hill Bridle Circuits.
- ▶ The survey was open from 16th - 31st March 2020 and attracted 129 responses, with an estimated 1,450 horses in their community. (Appx 1)

Riding Habits

- ▶ 68% of riding time is spent hacking
- ▶ Only 47% of this is off-road
- ▶ 48% only hack directly from their yard
- ▶ 35% do not have any transport
- ▶ 100% wear hi-viz

On-Road Experiences

Riders were asked to recollect their experiences over previous 24 months

		Caused by vehicles	Caused by cyclists
Impact/injury/fall	> 5 incidents		.83%
	1 - 5 incidents	6.67%	3.31%
Put safety of rider and horse at risk	> 5 incidents	29.5%	4.1%
	1 - 5 incidents	53.28%	58.2%
Behaviour e.g. verbal, threats	> 5 incidents	19.67%	5.74%
	1 - 5 incidents	45%	22.95%

- 83% had experienced safety issues with vehicles
- 62% had experienced safety issues with cyclists
- 65% had experienced unpleasant/threatening behaviour from motorists
- 29% had experienced unpleasant/threatening behaviour from cyclists

Off-Road Experiences

Riders were asked to recollect their experiences over previous 24 months

		Cyclists	Dogs	Dog owners/walkers
Impact/injury/fall	> 5 incidents			
	1 - 5 incidents	6.56%		
Safety issue or dog attack	> 5 incidents	1.64%	5.74%	
	1 - 5 incidents	30.33%	52.46%	
Behaviour	> 5 incidents	.82%		2.46%
	1 - 5 incidents	12.3%		34.43%

- Cyclists were less of an issue off-road with 32% safety incidence rate
- The bigger problem lie with dogs worrying or attacking horses 58% and threatening behaviour from their owners or walkers 37%

Cookham Bridle Circuit

- ▶ Created more than 30 years ago, as a pleasant circular route around quiet country lanes, by-ways and woodland. However, as much of the route is on-road, increasing urbanisation now causes safety issues. (Appx 2)
- ▶ Cookham Parish has only 8% of the PROW accessible to horse riders, which is the 2nd lowest in the Borough, with only to Datchet, Old Windsor & Wraysbury having less.
- ▶ Horses stabled in Cookham Village, can only access the route via Cookham Rise or B4447, proving harrowing for the respondents.
- ▶ Only 40% of respondents have ridden the route, 20% did not know about it.
- ▶ Those not riding the route cited the following reasons;
 - ▶ 16% too many road sections
 - ▶ 22% no transport
 - ▶ 20% no parking

Cookham Bridle Circuit (2)

- ▶ Respondents suggested improvements;
 - ▶ Return the route through Bisham Woods to Cookham Dean rather than ending on A302.
 - ▶ Permitted bridleway closure through Park Farm now prevents a circular route, back to Cookham Common.
 - ▶ Parking to be able to join the route in a safe place.
 - ▶ More off-road sections needed e.g. field margins, upgrading footpaths, access to Green Way
 - ▶ Unsuitable surface on Bridleway 19, from Malders Lane to Long Lane.
 - ▶ Upgrade cycleway on B4447 to multi-use

Knowl Hill Bridle Circuit

- ▶ The route was established over 20 years ago and has a northern and southern section, across the Parishes of Hurley, WSL and Shottesbrooke, dissected by A4. (Appx 3)
- ▶ 54% had ridden part of the route, 10% did not know about it
- ▶ Reasons for not riding the route;
 - ▶ 20% too many road sections
 - ▶ 30% no transport
 - ▶ 20% no parking
- ▶ Respondents suggested improvements in following areas;
 - ▶ Safe crossing of A4 (Knowl Hill and Littlewick Green)
 - ▶ Alternative to riding Warren Row Road
 - ▶ Alternative to riding Burchett's Green Lane to link up with CBC
 - ▶ Reducing speed of traffic and improving safety at junctions
 - ▶ Attention to maintenance on southern section near Castle Royale Golf Club

General sentiments

- ▶ 71% of respondents felt that riding had become less safe over the last 24 months and they would prefer to avoid riding on roads but have little option.
- ▶ 61% find it extremely frustrating that over the evolution of time, many bridleways now end at a main road.
- ▶ 65% would ride more if there was a better network of off-road linkages.
- ▶ 64% were in favour of upgrading all rights of way to multi-use access.

Key Findings

- ▶ Motor vehicles presented the highest safety related issues on-road, with respondents reporting worsening of behaviour over last 24 months.
- ▶ Riding off-road, dog attacks and owners/walkers were the biggest hazard, with dogs often not under full control.
- ▶ 67% of safety incidents go unreported to Police or BHS, so official data is grossly understated.
- ▶ Increases in urbanisation and the related traffic, means that the Cookham and Knowl Hill routes are no longer the safe haven for equestrians that they were intended to be. The same goes for on-road linkages to bridleways across the Borough.
- ▶ Only 22% of PROW in the Borough are accessible for equestrians.
- ▶ Equestrians do not use roads by choice, they would prefer local safe off-road riding. Transporting horses to off-road facilities that offer permits, such as Windsor Great Park and BCA, or further afield to more rural locations, is not possible for 35% who do not have transport and not feasible, in terms of time and effort to do so on a regular basis, for the remaining 65%.

Recommendations

- ▶ Education programme for vehicles, cyclists, dog owners and riders, so that how we can harmoniously share multi-use access. This could include signage in known hotspots.
- ▶ Licencing or accreditation of commercial dog walkers, to encourage greater responsibility around horses.
- ▶ Continue to work with RBWM PROW to investigate improvements to Cookham and Knowl Hill circuits to increase both safety and usage by creating additional multi-use paths, linkages, off-road riding access e.g. Ashley Hill Forest, provision of parking and safe road crossings.
- ▶ Invite more volunteers for sub-group to fully investigate safety improvements in all areas of the Borough, particularly for Windsor and Ascot.
- ▶ Review speed limits and improve signage in Cookham and Cookham Dean, Lee Lane, Burchetts Green Lane, Warren Row Road, Terry's Lane, Mileys Road, Twyford Road. Consideration could also be given to the 'Quiet Lane' initiative by CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England).
- ▶ Identify which highway verges, cycleways, open spaces owned by RBWM could be opened to multi-use, in order to separate horses from motor traffic.
- ▶ Planning and developments in the Borough to consider impact on horse routes and incorporate multi-use access, rather than cycling only.
- ▶ Create a dialogue with local landowners regarding the potential subsidies available through the new Agriculture Bill, as a conduit to opening up access to field headlands and upgrading footpaths/cycleways to multi-use, in order to create safe linkages and additional off-road routes.
- ▶ Educate local riders to report maintenance issues to RBWM PROW and safety to Police or BHS.

Advice on Non-motorised user routes in England and Wales

The
British
Horse
Society

The law and management of public access rights varies between the four countries of the United Kingdom. This advice note applies to England and Wales only

If this is a printed copy, please check www.bhs.org.uk/accessadvice for the latest version (date top of page 2).

BHS Statement

The majority of off-road routes could and should accommodate all non-motorised vulnerable road users—equestrians, cyclists, pedestrians and mobility buggy users—and therefore be truly (non-mechanically propelled) multi-user¹ routes.

None of these users should be excluded from a motor-free route and thus forced onto carriageways with the increased danger to them and to motorists. All non-motorised vulnerable road users need off-road routes so it is inequitable and poor value to create a safe off-road route which excludes any non-motorised users.

The Society welcomes the Government's policy², expressed by Richard Benyon in 2011, that highway authorities and other providers should accommodate horse riders as well as cyclists and pedestrians on all off-road routes where it is practicable. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 gave statutory access rights to most land for all users in Scotland and such an approach should be followed in respect of cycle routes in England and Wales.

With the increasing attention to cycling and the advent of the government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, the BHS calls for horse-riders and carriage-drivers to be included in any provisions for cyclists or pedestrians which could physically include equestrians. Equestrians are minority users but are heavily reliant on public bridleways and byways to allow them off the roads. Horse riders in England and Wales have access to only 22% of legally recorded public rights of way and carriage drivers to no more than 6%, which means large areas have no off-road access at all. In addition, an increasing number of those few bridleways and byways are physically unavailable or inaccessible.

¹ Multi-user has no legal definition and is often confused in its meaning but generally means all users, not only pedestrians. The BHS takes it to mean all non-motorised users.

² 14 June 2011, Richard Benyon MP, the Minister for Natural Environment and Fisheries, letter to Anne Main MP

It should be noted that:

- Routes that cater for all non-motorised vulnerable road users represent best value in public spend.
- Off-road routes reduce the number of vulnerable road users (including equestrians) on the roads, increasing safety for everyone and reducing delays for motorists.
- Ease of access for people with impaired mobility is increased by shared use paths. Many people who ride or carriage-drive could not walk or cycle.
- Equestrians, walkers and cyclists have comfortably shared use of paths in urban and rural environments for the last 150 years since bicycles became commonplace.
- If all possible routes are promoted as traffic-free shared use³ (not as 'cycling routes', as on Ordnance Survey leisure maps) inclusive of all non-motorised users, it creates acceptance of other users and consideration of all needs.
- The number of horse riders on most cycleways is likely to be few compared with cyclists and pedestrians but the route may be crucial for those users. They are likely to avoid times which are busiest for cycling.
- Horse riding and driving have considerable health benefits⁴ and equestrians should not be prevented from enjoying open air exercise and recreation by failure to provide safe routes.
- The economic value of the equestrian sector was £4.7 billion in 2019⁵

Addressing Common Concerns

Concerns about whether to include equestrian users on cycleways are:

1. **Assumption of Conflict** – Incidents of real conflict are rare and on investigation are usually found to be perceived rather than actual conflict or arising from lack of understanding of who may use the route or lack of consideration for others⁶. The solution is to better educate all users and promote understanding and tolerance by shared use on all routes.
2. **Width** – There are many bridleways which are less than 3m wide and shared by riders, cyclists and pedestrians without problems. Intermittent verges or occasional passing places or refuges may be feasible even if the whole length cannot be wider. There are unlikely to be so many horses as to make narrow routes impractical but including those equestrians who need the route could save lives.

³ Durham Railway Paths has an excellent [charter](#) for users and no history of conflict on 100 miles of path.

⁴ [BHS Health Benefits of Riding 2011](#)

⁵ British Equestrian Trade Association National Equestrian Survey 2019

⁶ Countryside Agency report CRN32, How people interact on off-road routes

3. **Cost of surface** – Surfaces suitable for all users can be provided at a lower cost than tarmac, and even a non-slip tarmac surface off-road is safer for equestrians than motor roads. Horses are unlikely to have a detrimental effect on a surface which would be provided for cycle use.
4. **Cost of barriers** – Barriers to prevent motor vehicular use but permit all other users are used successfully at relatively low cost. They must be legally authorised and comply with the British Standard. They should only be used where there is a genuine danger from motor vehicles and where the loss of accessibility of the path to all legitimate users is justified by that danger.
5. **Horses' droppings** pose no hazard to human health and quickly disperse. Where horse use is high, providing an unsealed surface for part of the width and encouraging riders to use it or to keep to one side can be effective so that the other side will be dung-free.

BHS Policy on Widths

Circumstances vary and every route should be considered independently on its own merits and potential benefits for increasing safety by taking equestrians off roads. A less than ideal width may be acceptable where a narrow off-road route is safer than the alternative road. Passing places, attention to vegetation or adjacent hazards (e.g. barbed wire) and encouraging cyclists to slow down may be adequate mitigation to provide safety for all.

Share With Care

The BHS strongly advocates promotion of sharing and tolerance between all users. There are a great many examples nationally, including most bridleways and byways, where amicable shared use is normal.

It is very common that investigation of an alleged problem finds that it is only a matter of misperception or misunderstanding. It is essential to make clear to all users that horses are permitted and what behaviour is expected of all users—Be Aware, Take Care, Share. Promoting a route as a cycleway often leads to minority users being discriminated against and made unwelcome, even if it is a bridleway. This is morally wrong and there is no need.

Appropriate signs will help considerably in passing the message that horses are welcome. The BHS has examples which are successfully in use to promote consideration (contact access@bhs.org.uk). The more that horse use of routes is normal, the better the cooperation will be between users, if the use is promoted for all. Social media and posters at local livery yards can be helpful in encouraging use.

Design

Design of shared use routes is well covered in the government document [On the right track: surface requirements for shared use routes](#).

The dilemma of what surface to use to accommodate horses where cycles are the majority user and desire a sealed surface can be met by using resin or polymer bound rubber crumb. This has been successful on a number of trails where it has been liked by all users. It has the bonus of using a waste product (vehicle tyres) as well as being free-draining, smooth to wheels and comfortable under foot and hoof.

Examples of paths shared by riders, cyclists and walkers

In addition to bridleways, byways and unclassified roads, the examples below show that shared use paths and trails for walkers, riders and cyclists are successful in rural and urban situations and continue to be developed. They may accommodate wheelchair and mobility scooter users subject to barriers.

- Monsal Trail and Tunnels, Peak District: 8.5 miles, opened in 1981 and extended in 2011, funded by the Dept of Transport, with a code of conduct.
- Chiseldon to Marlborough Railway Line, Wiltshire: approx. 7 miles in use since 1988.
- Railway Paths, Durham. Over 100 miles on 11 paths, in use since the 1990s, with a further four paths under development. Charter to encourage responsible use.
- The Camel Trail, Cornwall: 18 miles, 400,000 users each year. Through conservation areas (SSSI and SAC).
- The Meon Valley Trail, Hampshire: 11 miles with part also open to carriage-drivers.
- Pennine Bridleway: 280 miles in total with the Mary Towneley Loop 47 miles.
- The Derbyshire Greenways: 22 shared use trails.
- Great Northern Railway Trail, Bradford.
- Letchworth Greenway, Hertfordshire 21km trail around Letchworth.
- High Peak and Tissington Trails, Peak District, Derbyshire: 17 and 13 miles.
- Gellings Green Ways and Little Wood, Knowsley and Liverpool
- The Liverpool Loop Line and Halewood Triangle, Trans Pennine Trail
- The Dream and Mineral Line, St Helens and Halton

Many more examples are available from the BHS.

RBWM LOCAL ACCESS FORUM
Riding and Multi-User sub-group

Horse Rider Survey
March 2020

RBWM Local Access Forum – Riding and multi-user sub-group

Report of Horse riders survey March 2020

Representatives; Anne Woodward, Trisha Mentzel, Stephanie James

Introduction

The riding and multi-user access group has been established with the mission to;

Improve safety and minimise risk for equestrians, who are legitimate, vulnerable road users, by expanding the off-road multi-use network, providing safe alternative linkages between PROWs and education of road and PROW users.

The group's mission is aligned with the safety campaigns of the British Horse Society (BHS) to both get horses off the road and to improve education of road users and dog owners.

The Milestone report 2020, showed that on average only 22% of the total PROW were accessible for riders (bridleways & byways). However, this varied between Parish, shown below in kilometres.

Parish	Footpath	Bridleways & Byways	Total km	% access for multi-user
Bisham	13.15	4.75	17.90	27%
Bray	36.80	12.75	49.55	26%
Cookham	34.14	2.85	36.99	8%
Cox Green	8.40	1.40	9.79	14%
Datchet	4.76		4.76	0%
Eton	18.40	3.56	21.96	16%
Horton	1.20	1.25	2.45	51%
Hurley	31.61	13.02	44.63	29%
Maidenhead	29.80	3.04	32.83	9%
Old Windsor	4.57		4.57	0%
Shottesbrooke	3.24	1.61	4.85	33%
Sunningdale	3.55	2.00	5.56	36%
Sunninghill	11.24	4.89	16.14	30%
Waltham SL	17.73	7.21	24.94	29%
White Waltham	11.01	5.04	16.05	31%
Windsor	4.34	3.90	8.24	47%
Wraysbury	9.65		9.65	0%
	243.58	67.28	310.86	22%

Urbanisation in the RBWM has been increasing, giving rise to additional traffic on-road and increased cycle and walkers off-road. As the population grows, then the dangers of on-road will only become more acute.

Year	Population (1)	Estimated # cars (2)
2001	133541	80,125
2010	143988	86,393
2019	151,422	90,853
2031	156,000	93,600
(1) Source; Public Health for Berkshire 2017 (2) Car ownership rates, RAC Foundation 2012 (605 per 1,000 population)		

In the Borough Local Plan 2017, section 6 covers Green Belt and we noted the intention to improve off-road routes for equestrians, in section 6.8.22;

6.8.22

Encouragement will be given to off road riding facilities such as headlands or bridleways within farm units.

Government initiatives

One of the aims of the Agriculture Bill is to increase public access for recreation, in return for subsidies.

In response to BHS, Grant Schapps stated “The Department is keen to make certain that those who choose to ride their horses on the highway feel safe. We also want to ensure that those in charge of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm, in the event of a collision, bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger they pose to others. That is why we are currently reviewing The Highway Code and, further to a public consultation, propose to implement new measures to improve safety for horse riders, such as creating specific passing distances and speeds for other vehicles. The Highway Code and, further to a public consultation, propose to implement new measures to improve safety for horse riders, such as creating specific passing distances and speeds for other vehicles.” Copies of both letters are shown in appendix 4 & 5.

Horse Owner Survey

To gain insights into the current riding experiences within the Borough, a survey was developed, the results of which are summarised below. The full survey can be viewed here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-K3P3SNXM7/>.

Methodology

An on-line survey was distributed to riding clubs, livery yards, Facebook groups etc, across the Borough, covering a variety of questions regarding riding habits, including how much hacking is on-road, experiences and safety issues on and off-road, as well as specific questions relating to the RBWM promoted bridle circuits around Cookham and Knowl Hill. The survey was open from 16th – 31st March 2020 and attracted 129 responses, with an estimated 1,450 horses in their community.

Appendix 1 shows the distribution of the respondees.

Key areas of the survey

Riding habits

All respondents hacked in some form, 48% only hack directly from their yard, so riding environment in immediate locality is important. 35% do not have any transport to have the possibility to ride elsewhere.

On average, 68% of their riding is in the form of hacking, but only 47% of this is off-road. So, 53% of the riders' time is spent on roads. This reflects the low % of PROW available to horses.

All responders wore Hi-Viz, with 60% on both horse and rider.

On-road experiences

Riders were asked to recall, over last 24 months;

1. Incidents that resulted in an impact, injury or fall
2. Incidents that threatened the safety of horse and rider
3. Threatening or intimidating behaviour

		Vehicles	Cyclists
Impact/injury/fall	> 5 incidents		.83%
	1 – 5 incidents	6.67%	3.31%
Safety issue	> 5 incidents	29.5%	4.1%
	1 – 5 incidents	53.28%	58.2%
Behaviour	> 5 incidents	19.67%	5.74%
	1 – 5 incidents	45%	22.95%

Whilst thankfully, incidents resulting in injury were comparatively low at 6.67%, 83% of riders had experienced significant safety issues with vehicles, with 29.5% experiencing this more than 5 times. 62% experiencing issues with cyclists.

Bur these statistics are potentially skewed as people who go on roads are not the owners of nervous horses.

The verbal and threatening behaviour of both motorists and cyclists is also a concern, 65% experiencing unpleasant behaviour from motorists, less from cyclists just under 30%.

Hot spots for on-road incidents were identified as;

B4447 Maidenhead to Cookham (including Lightlands Lane)

Long Lane, Cookham

Terry's Lane, Cookham

Sutton Road, Cookham

Lee Lane, Maidenhead

Warren Row Road, Cockpole Green/Warren Row

Rose Lane, Hurley/Cockpole Green

Old Windsor

Dorney Common Road

Crossing A30 Sunningdale to Shrubs Hill

Some common issues experienced include;

- Driving too fast particularly on country lanes, where extra hazards of narrow/single track roads and blind bends
- Drivers and cyclists passing too closely
- Overtaking in unsafe places, impatient to wait
- Threatening behaviour, verbal abuse, holding hand on horn
- No longer hack on roads due to high risk
- Car passed so close, clipped stirrup iron

67.77% did not report these incidents to Police or BHS, so clearly incidents are under-reported.

Off-road experiences

The same questions were asked regarding cyclists, but experiences were also sought regarding dog attacks and behaviour of dog owners/walkers.

		Cyclists	Dogs	Dog owners/walkers
Impact/injury/fall	> 5 incidents			
	1 – 5 incidents	6.56%		
Safety issue or dog attack	> 5 incidents	1.64%	5.74%	
	1 – 5 incidents	30.33%	52.46%	
Behaviour	> 5 incidents	.82%		2.46%
	1 – 5 incidents	12.3%		34.43%

Incidents with off-road cyclists are half that of on-road at 31%. The biggest issue relates to dog attacks, with just under 60% experiencing uncontrolled and dangerous behaviour. Threatening behaviour of dog owners or walkers is higher than motorists or cyclists at around 37%.

Less issues reported regarding cyclists, with dogs and owners more of a problem.

Hot spots for dog incidents were identified as;

Knowl Hill Bridleway Circuit - 3 incidents reported involving German Shepherd, Huskies,
 Bowsey Wood – on KHBC
 Pudding Hill – on KHBC
 Maidenhead Thicket/ Pinkney's Green- 5
 Cookham Dean
 Jubilee river – 2
 Swinley Forrest
 Windsor Great Park

Common comments from respondents;

- Owners not having dogs under control and unable to recall.
- Allow dogs to roam, often out of sight.
- Bad behaviour includes aggressive barking, charging at horses, snapping at heels.
- Professional dog walkers with >4 dogs, not on leads can quickly going into pack mode.

- Verbal abuse towards riders, from owners who object to putting their dogs on a lead or complaining that horses 'shouldn't be there'.

66.39% did not report any of these incidents to Police or BHS, so official statistics are under-reported.

Cookham Bridle Circuit – Appendix 3

The circuit is promoted by the Borough and created more than 30 years ago, with a view to creating a pleasant circular route around quiet country lanes, by-ways and woodland. However, much of the route is on-road, with any horse owners located in Cookham Village, needing to hack through Cookham Rise or Along B4447, to reach the circuit. Cookham Parish has only 8% of the PROW accessible to horse riders, which is the 2nd lowest in the Borough, with only Datchet, Old Windsor & Wraysbury having less.

Note; The current map is out of date as the permitted bridleway through Park Farm, was withdrawn several years ago.

40% of respondents have ridden the route, but 20% did not know about it. The remaining 40% who knew about it, but had not ridden it, cited the following reasons;

- 16% too many road sections
- 22% no transport
- 20% no parking

Specific comments reported by respondents;

- Track through Bisham Woods ends on A302.
- Lack of parking to be able to join the route in a safe place.
- Too much road work, field edges that have been accessible, now closed off.
- Unsuitable surface on BW19, from Malders Lane to Long Lane.
- Bridleway sections heavily used by walkers & cyclists, dogs not under control.
- Permitted bridleway closure through Park Farm now prevents a circular route, back to Cookham Common.
- More off-road sections needed
- Would be good to have access to Green Way
- Could cycleway on B4447 be upgraded to multi-use

Knowl Hill Bridle Circuit – Appendix 3

The circuit is in 2 sections, which are dissected by A4. The northern section can link up with Cookham circuit by using an underpass at Stubbings. The route was established more than 20 years ago. There is a higher % of PROW accessible to riders, compared to Cookham, with average 29% (combining Hurley, WSL & Shottesbrooke).

More respondents had ridden this route 54%, with only 10% not knowing about it. The reasons for not riding the route;

- 20% too many road sections
- 30% no transport
- 20 % no parking

Parking is available at BCA, but a permit is required costing £80 per year. 20% of the respondents had a permit, 28% didn't know about it and 23% said, either didn't want to pay or couldn't afford it.

Common issues reported by respondents;

- Crossing the A4, which dissects the north and south section of the circuit is dangerous, some form of crossing would help, at Knowl Hill and Littlewick Green.
- Too many busy roads and junctions.
- Speed of traffic, specific mentions of Twyford Road and Miley Road (WSL).
- Would like better off-road connections, specific mentions of linking
 - Pudding Hill to southern section of circuit – avoiding Warren Row Road.
 - Linking KHBC at Burchett's Green to Pinkney's Green and CBC– avoiding Burchett's Green Lane.
- Maintenance
 - Drainage of section Uncles Lane/Brook Lane, east side of Castle Royale golf course.
 - Overhanging tree branches, in particular, west of Castle Royale golf course.
 - Dangerous holes
 - Signage warning of horses at road crossings and where bridleways join roads.

General comments

71% of respondents felt that riding had become less safe over the last 24 months and they would prefer to avoid riding on roads but have little option. 61% find it extremely frustrating that, over the evolution of time, many bridleways now end at a main road and 65% would ride more if there was a better network of off-road linkages. 64% were in favour of upgrading all rights of way to multi-use access.

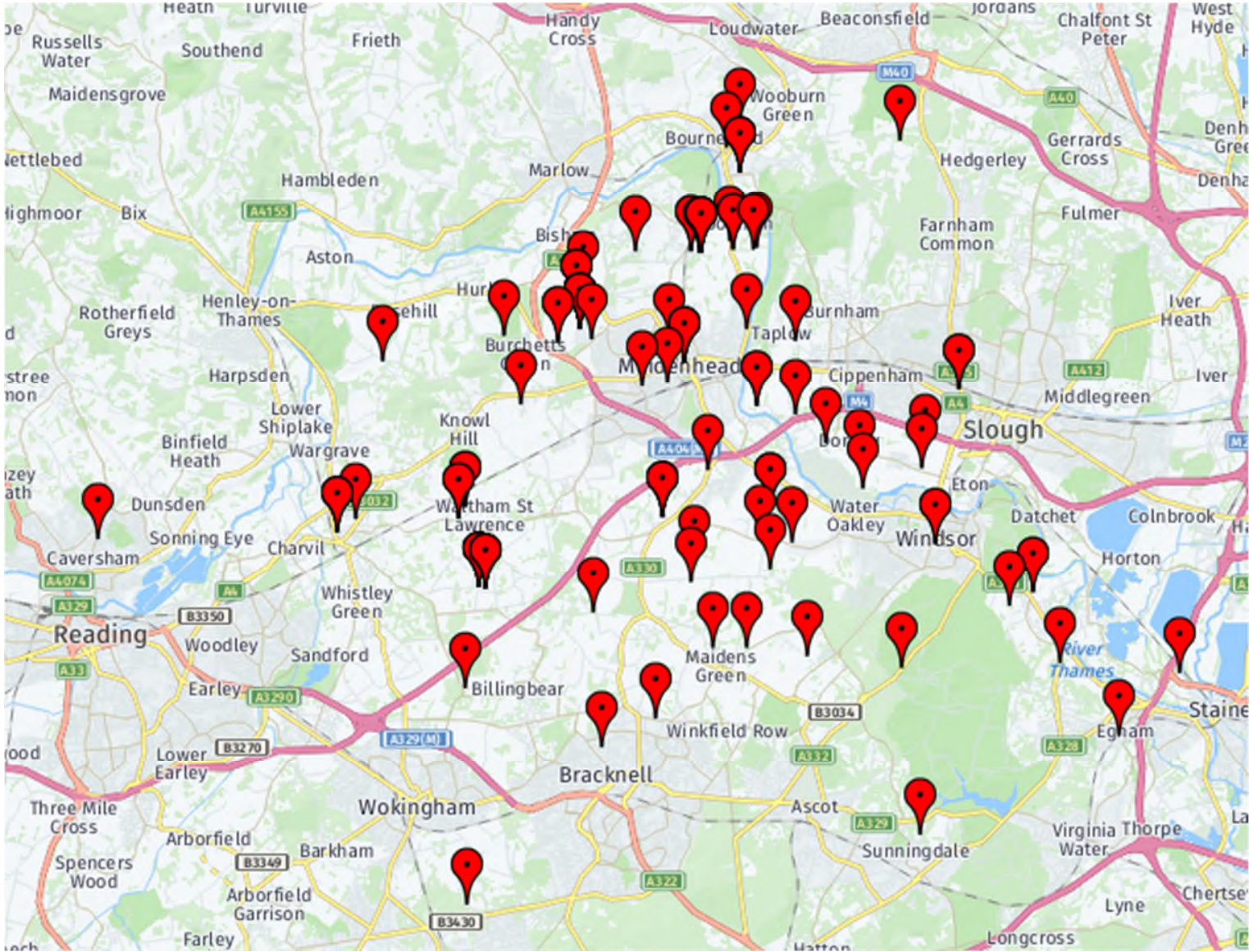
Key Findings

1. Motor vehicles presented the highest safety related issues on-road, with respondents reporting worsening of behaviour over last 24 months.
2. Riding off-road dog attacks and owners/walkers were the biggest hazard, with dogs often not under full control.
3. Most incidents go unreported.
4. Increases in urbanisation and the related traffic, means that the Cookham and Knowl Hill routes are no longer the safe haven for equestrians that they were intended to be. The same goes for on-road linkages to bridleways across the Borough.
5. Only 22% of PROW in the Borough are accessible for equestrians.
6. Equestrians do not use roads by choice, they would prefer local safe off-road riding. Transporting horses to off-road facilities that offer permits, such as Windsor Great Park and BCA, or further afield to more rural locations, is not possible for 35% who do not have transport and not feasible, in terms of time and effort to do so on a regular basis, for the remaining 65%.

Recommendations

1. Education programme for vehicles, cyclists, dog owners and riders, so that how we can harmoniously share multi-use access. This could include signage in known hotspots.
2. Licencing or accreditation of commercial dog walkers, to encourage greater responsibility around horses.
3. Continue to work with RBWM PROW to investigate improvements to Cookham and Knowl Hill circuits to increase both safety and usage by creating additional multi-use paths, linkages, off-road riding access e.g. Ashley Hill Forest, provision of parking and safe road crossings.
4. Invite more volunteers for sub-group to fully investigate safety improvements in all areas of the Borough, particularly for Windsor and Ascot.
5. Review speed limits and improve signage in Cookham and Cookham Dean, Lee Lane, Burchetts Green Lane, Warren Row Road, Terry's Lane, Mileys Road, Twyford Road. Consideration could also be given to the 'Quiet Lane' initiative by CPRE (Campaign to Protect Rural England).
6. Identify which highway verges, cycleways, open spaces owned by RBWM which could be opened to multi-use, in order to separate horses from motor traffic.
7. Planning and developments in the Borough to consider impact on horse routes and incorporate multi-use access, rather than cycling only.
8. Create a dialogue with local landowners regarding the potential subsidies available through the new Agriculture Bill, as a conduit to opening up access to field headlands and upgrading footpaths/cycleways to multi-use, in order to create safe linkages and additional off-road routes.
9. Educate local riders to report maintenance issues to RBWM PROW

Appendix 1 - Distribution of respondents



Appendix 3 - Knowl Hill Bridle Circuit



Appendix 4



The Right Honourable Grant Shapps MP

Secretary of State for Transport

21 May 2020

Dear The Right Honourable Grant Shapps MP,

Re: Statutory guidance - Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to COVID-19.

I refer to the above and read with interest the following advice: *'When the country gets back to work, we need them to carry on cycling, and to be joined by millions more. With public transport capacity reduced, the roads in our largest cities, in particular, may not be able to cope without it.*

We also know that in the new world, pedestrians will need more space. Indications are that there is a significant link between COVID-19 recovery and fitness. Active travel can help us become more resilient.

That is why towns and cities in the UK and around the world are making or proposing radical changes to their roads to accommodate active travel.

We recognise this moment for what it is: a once in a generation opportunity to deliver a lasting transformative change in how we make short journeys in our towns and cities.'

The British Horse Society believes that in delivering any network management in response to Covid 19 it is important that active travel solutions do not exclude equestrians who are the most vulnerable road user. If equestrians are not provided for in such schemes they can find themselves in the very unsafe position of being sandwiched between speeding cyclists on one side and speeding cars and lorries on the other – a recipe for certain disaster.

Since 2010 the Society has had 4,645 road incidents involving horses reported to it, 1080 horses have been injured, 395 horses have died and 44 humans have lost their lives. The Society estimates that only 10% of such incidents get reported to it.

Horse riders have access to only 22% of the public rights of way network and carriage drivers to just 5%. Invariably equestrians have to use the road network to access their nearest bridleway or byway and it is important that they are able to do this safely and are provided with safe routes just as walkers and cyclists are. Including equestrians provides even better value for the public purse.

Alan Hiscox, the Society's Director of Safety, and myself would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further virtually with you and your Ministers.

Yours faithfully

Mark Weston

Director of Access

07967973196

Mark.weston@bhs.org.uk

Appendix 5



Department
for Transport

Mark Weston
Director of Access
The British Horse Society

From the Secretary of State
The Rt. Hon. Grant Shapps

Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

Tel: 0300 330 3000
E-Mail: grant.shapps@dt.gov.uk

Web site: www.gov.uk/dt

Our Ref: MC291747

1 June 2020

Dear Mark,

Thank you for your letter of 26 May 2020, about statutory guidance and the Traffic Management Act 2004: network management in response to COVID-19.

As lockdown measures are eased, the Government's priority is to help the fight against coronavirus. The advice remains to stay at home, as much as possible, and if people need to travel they should consider if their journey is necessary and stay local if they can. However, as the country gets back to work, it may not be possible for many people to work from home or stay local. With pressures on our public transport system and the need to maintain social distancing measures, it is sensible to promote alternative forms of transport.

It is also sensible that our transport recovery plans look to support our goals to decarbonise, and to improve air quality and public health. This takes account of how people's travel habits and preferences have changed, as a result of coronavirus, and how we can embed the active travel benefits that we are seeing in both our cities and rural communities.

The Department is keen to encourage cycling and walking as healthy and environmentally friendly forms of travel that support social distancing. We believe that these can be easily adopted as alternatives to commuting to work on public transport or in a private car, whereas horse riding is generally considered a leisure activity.

That said, the Department is keen to make certain that those who choose to ride their horses on the highway feel safe. We also want to ensure that those in charge of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm, in the event of a collision, bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger they pose to others. That is why we are currently reviewing The Highway Code and, further to a public consultation, propose to implement new

measures to improve safety for horse riders, such as creating specific passing distances and speeds for other vehicles.

You may be aware that we have been working closely with Alan Hiscox, representing the British Horse Society, and other key stakeholders on the review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Shapps', written in a cursive style.

Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR TRANSPORT