

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

From: BHS

Sent: 05 November 2020 09:18

To: Undisclosed recipients

Subject: Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

Dear Sir/Madam,

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans

With the issuing of the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy in 2017 and the implementation of Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans, the British Horse Society is keen that the implementation of these plans are not inadvertently detrimental to equestrians, and that provision is made for equestrians to be included on any safe off road routes that are to be provided.

The Society has received some disturbing reports of routes being provided on highway verges/margins for cyclists and walkers, with horse riders being excluded resulting in them being left as the proverbial 'meat in the sandwich' with cyclists whizzing past on their inside and cars and lorries thundering past on their outside, a recipe for disaster and something that will only increase the horrifying horse accident statistics.

Since 2010, the British Horse Society has had over 4,774 road incidents involving horses reported to it, 1080 horses have been injured, 395 horses have died, 44 humans have lost their lives and 1220 have been injured. The Society estimates that only 10% of such incidents are currently reported to it. The 2019/2020 hospital episodes statistics show that there were 3,331 admissions resulting from 'an animal rider or occupant of an animal drawn vehicle being injured in a transport accident.'

Ministers have consistently stressed that equestrians should be included in such strategies and plans.

2018: Jesse Norman MP, Parliamentary Under –Secretary of State for Transport in House of Commons debate on Road Safety, 5 November 2018: "We should be clear that the cycling and walking strategy may have that name but is absolutely targeted at vulnerable road users, including horse-riders...Horse riders are vulnerable road users—there is no doubt about that, and there never has been—and they have been included in the work we are doing."

2019 Transport Minister Michael Ellis MP (June 20th, 2019): "In November, the Government published its response to the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS): safety review call for evidence. The response sets out a vision and a two-year plan containing 50 actions to tackle cycling, walking and horse-riding safety."

The British Horse Society therefore advocates that the provision of all off road routes for whatever purpose, be it social, economic or environmental should include all non-motorised users. The Society will seek to ensure that all off road provision for non-motorised users in Local plans and spatial development strategies, transport plans, waste plans, minerals plans, National Park plans and rights of way improvement plans includes equestrians.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Society; the Society would welcome the opportunity to discuss the inclusion of equestrians in your Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Yours faithfully,

Mark Weston,
Director of Access