



To: Kingsley Parish Council
c/o Karine Nana Yonko
Parish Clerk
Parish.clerk@kingsleyparishcouncil.org

August 2016

Dear Sirs,

Re: Whitehill and Bordon – Equestrian Access Survey

We are writing to you to raise awareness of a survey that the British Horse Society (Hampshire) and Meon Valley Riding Club, supported by East Hampshire District Council, is carrying out to ascertain the needs of equestrians who live, ride and keep their horses/ponies/donkeys in and around the Whitehill and Bordon area.

As the area is set for substantial growth in the coming years, there will undoubtedly be a significant increase in traffic, not only on the main routes, but also along what are currently quieter lanes. As outlined in the Hampshire Countryside Access Plan, it is important to ensure that the connectivity of the public rights of way are protected and enhanced to enable vulnerable road users (such as walkers, equestrians, those who are less mobile and cyclists) a safer environment in which to travel or undertake leisure activities.

As part of the planned development for Whitehill and Bordon a 'Green Loop' will be created that will circumnavigate the town, providing vulnerable road users with an alternative non-motorised route. This loop will connect to the public rights of way network, including the long distance Shipwright's Way, and other new routes.

Currently this 'Loop' does not provide access for horse riders.

The British Horse Society and the Meon Riding Club (both of which represent the interests of local equestrians) have approached East Hampshire District Council to request that the 'Green Loop' is designated as a multi-user route to include horse riders. Our discussions have been encouraging. However, in order for our request to be considered we have been asked to provide evidence that there is a need by equestrians to be included.

It is known that many horse riders around the country will now not hack out because they cannot access safe off-road routes without having to negotiate busy roads and the poor behavior of drivers of vehicles. It is currently difficult for horse riders to negotiate their way around Whitehill and Bordon – the planned infrastructure, increase in traffic and access restrictions on the remaining MOD land will make it even more so.

We are sure you are familiar with Highways England's vision in its 'Strategy for Accessibility' which states:

"Our vision focuses on supporting our road users' journeys, pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians, those with disabilities (such as users with mobility or sensory

impairments) and other vulnerable users – while delivering longer-term benefits for communities and users alike.

We want to address the barriers our roads can sometimes create, help expand people's travel choices, enhance and improve network facilities, and make everyday journeys as easy as possible.

This will be achieved by ensuring our network supports and contributes to accessible, inclusive and integrated journeys which are safe, secure, comfortable and attractive. “

The survey, which is currently live, seeks to gather information to demonstrate the needs of local equestrians. It will close on the 30 September 2016. To view it please go to: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/Green_Loop.

We hope that local Parish Councils that are affected by this new growth will view our action as positive and in the interests of their local parishioners who ride in the area. We are also mindful of the needs of local carriage drivers who are invited to contact the BHS in Hampshire to discuss their needs.

Although this letter is primarily about our survey request, it is also about helping Whitehill and Bordon meet its aspirations as a healthy place to live. Horse riding is an active sport that encourages both abled and those less mobile to participate in.

The results of the survey will be made publically available, but if you wish to receive a copy please contact myself via e-mail: gail.johnson@outlook.com.

To read more about the BHS work in relation to access, safety and accidents please visit:

<http://www.bhs.org.uk/access-and-bridleways>

<http://www.bhs.org.uk/safety-and-accidents>

In the meantime, if you wish to contact me then please do so either by e-mail or telephone.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Yours faithfully,

GAIL D JOHNSON (Mrs)
County Access and Bridleways Officer
For and on behalf of the
British Horse Society (Hampshire)

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