

Influencing your local council

Nicola Greenwood

BHSII (reg'd)

BHS Access and Bridleways Officer – Wokingham

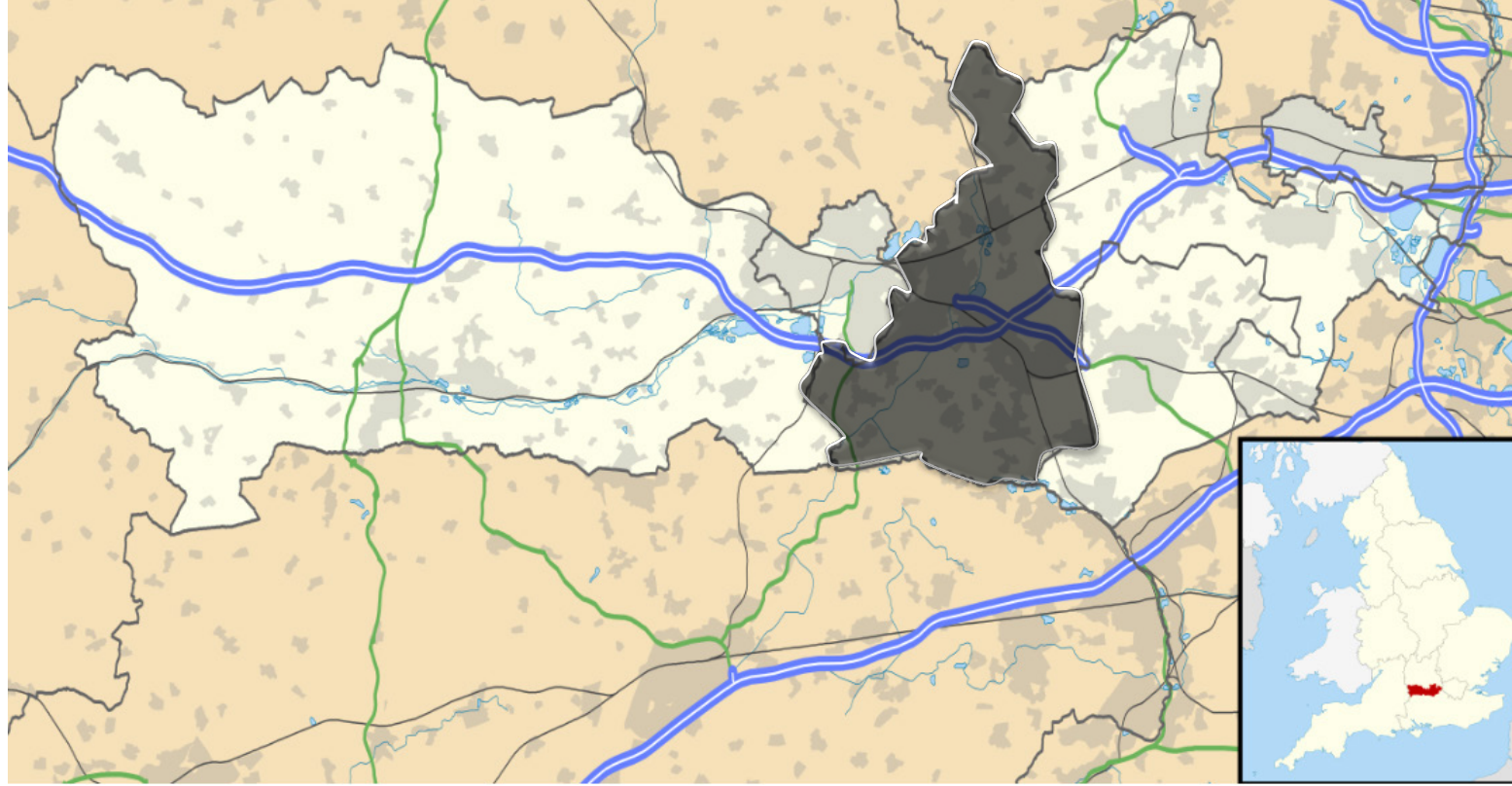
Janice Bridger

BHS Regional Access and Bridleways officer – South

Mid and West Berkshire Local Access Forum - Chair

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The
British
Horse
Society



- 179km² and one of 6 Unitary Authorities in Berkshire
- National Equine Database statistics list a total of 2,228 horses registered to owners living within Wokingham Borough. These horses contribute £12 million per annum to the local economy

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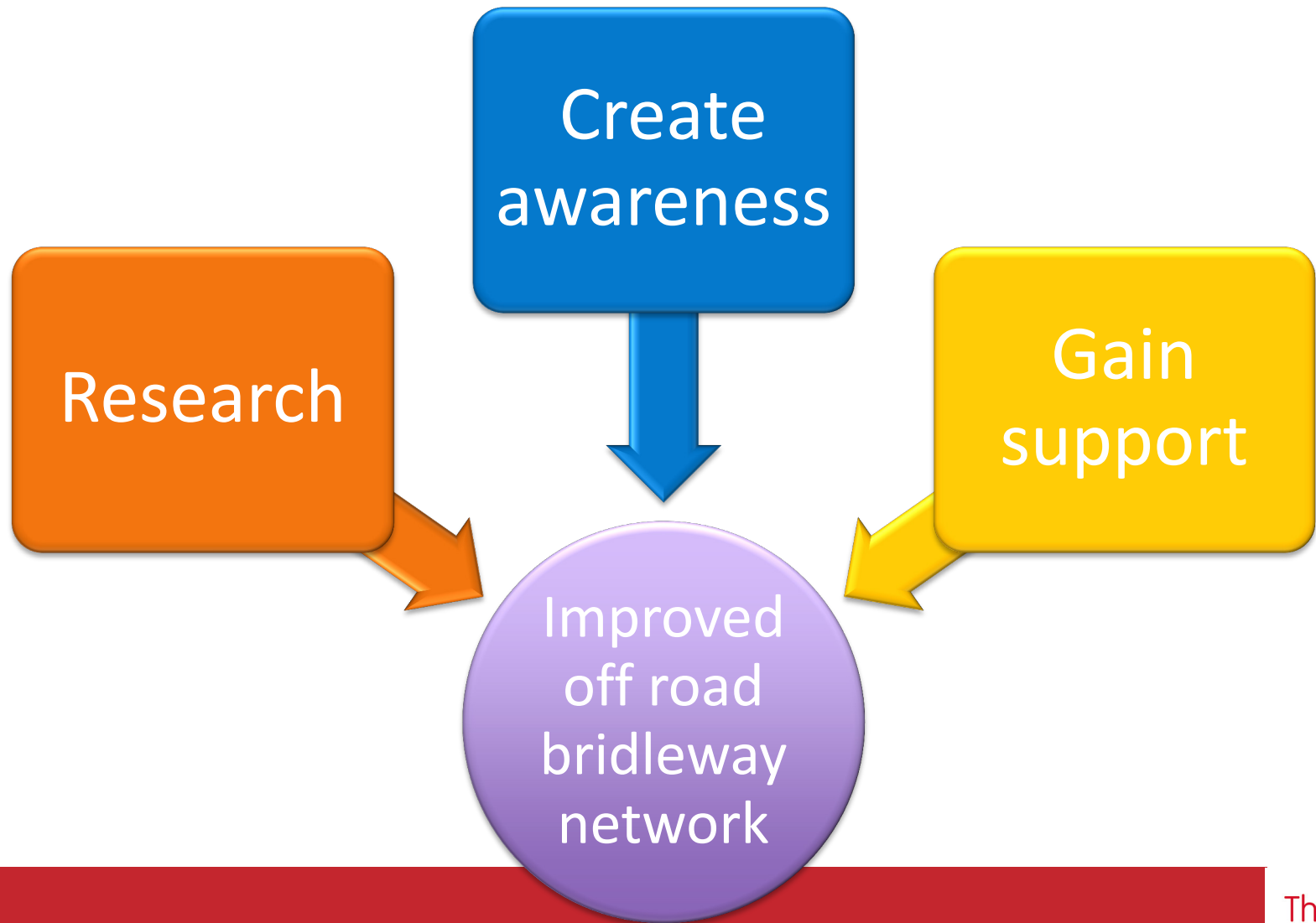
Background

Wokingham Borough

- The issues in Wokingham
 - Only 10% of the Rights of Way network is bridleway
 - 13,000 new houses to be built in the next 15 years
 - Riders using Main A roads to access bridleways and create circular rides
 - Some bridleways cross main A and B roads which carry heavy traffic at fast speeds making crossing too difficult for some riders to go out hacking
 - Wokingham Greenways plan may not include use by horse riders

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The Objectives



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Research

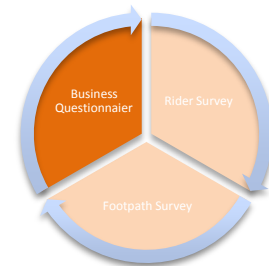


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Research

Equestrian Business

Questionnaire



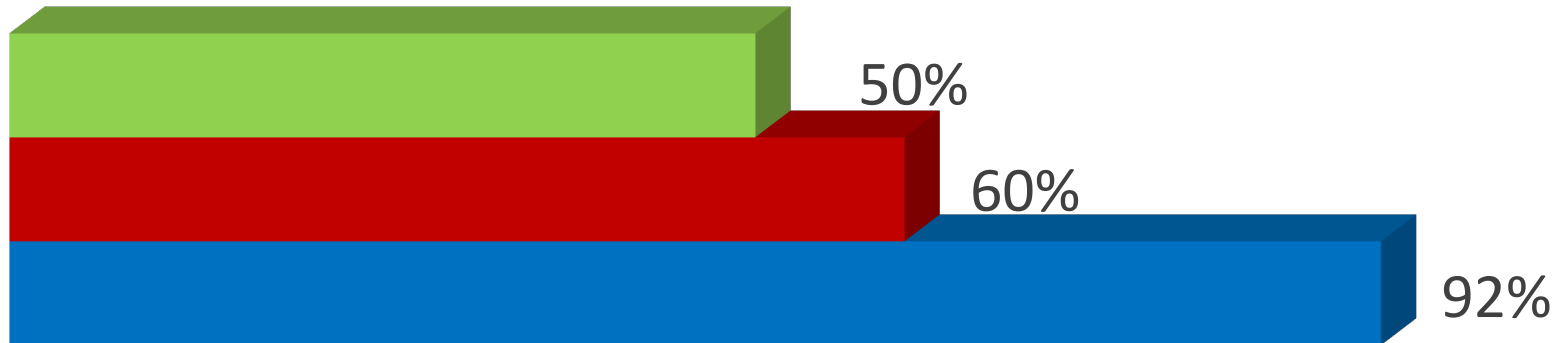
- Broad spectrum of businesses who are located or have a large client base in the Borough
 - Determine size and type of business, number of employees. If a livery yard, how many stables
 - Gain information about their opinions of the affect the development and its associated increase in traffic will have on their business
 - Agree/disagree statements and questions with 'delete as appropriate' answers




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Results

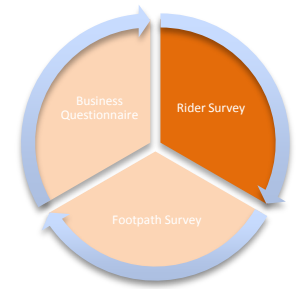
71 Equestrian Businesses participated

100% of Business owners agree that without more bridleways horse owners are likely to choose livery outside the Borough



-  Businesses who anticipate reduced business opportunity
-  Businesses who anticipate having to make a reduction in staff
-  Livery yards anticipate having to close

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Research

Rider Survey

- Aimed at all riders and horse owners who live or stable their horses within the Borough
 - Gain details of where they live and where they stable their horses
 - Agree/disagree statements and questions with 'delete as appropriate' answers
 - Use tack shops, local events and visits to livery yards to obtain opinions from sufficient numbers of riders

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Results

271 riders participated

100% of riders believe increased traffic from the developments will make riding out from their yard significantly more dangerous



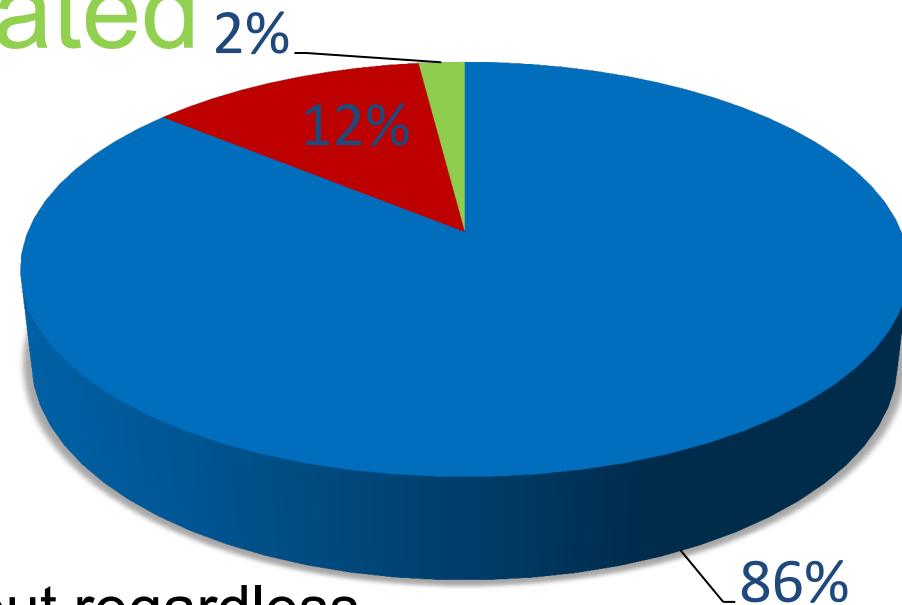
Riders who will ride out regardless



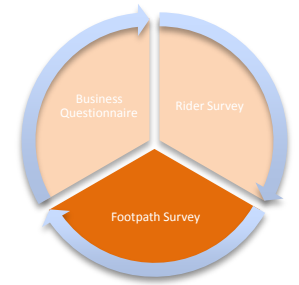
Riders who will stay and potentially not ride out from their yard



Riders who anticipate moving out of the borough



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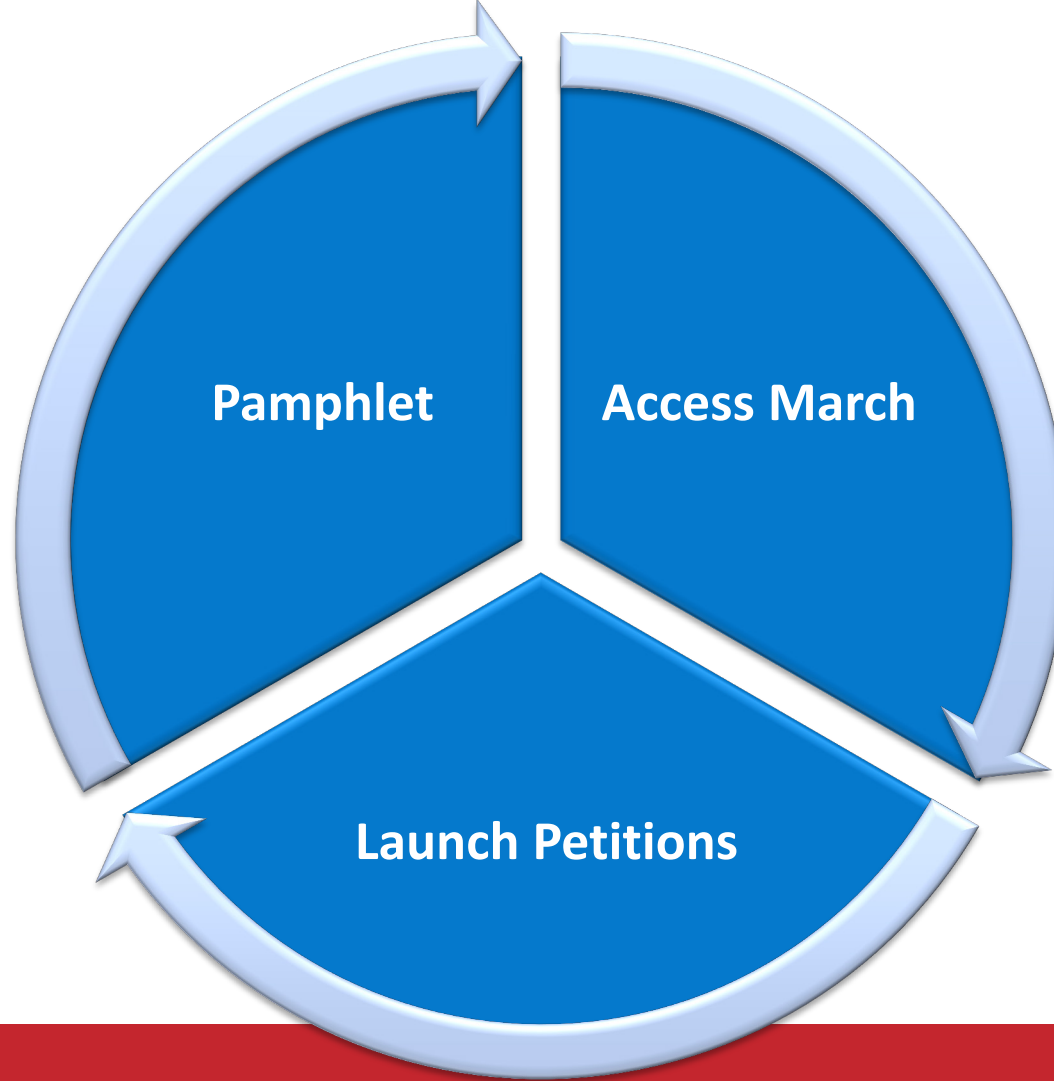
Research

Footpath Survey

- Survey footpaths which could be reclassified as bridleway to improve the network
 - Determine total length and plot width of pathway at various points e.g. every 50m, also including narrowest and widest places, note any potential blocks e.g. height restrictions, bollards etc.
 - Use ROWIP and Council Greenways Plan along with own survey to form a 'wish list' to enhance the network
 - Use Parish maps with details of each ROW number so that all information gathered is correct and easily transferred

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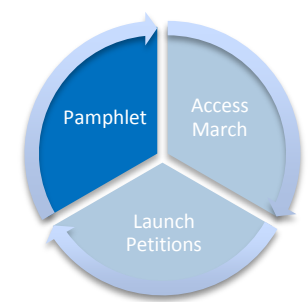
Create Awareness



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Create Awareness

Pamphlet



- Put together pamphlet with information from the research for distribution amongst influential people
 - Include statistics on horse ownership by postcode, information from National Equine Database supplied by the BHS, figures collated in 2010.
 - Simple colour scheme to appeal to Councilors, bold but not too modern or corporate.
 - Hard hitting statements, bold and or italics the most important information
 - Use recent photos taken on local roads outside of rush hour
 - One sheet of paper 3 fold to keep printing cost down
 - Local printing company

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**Horses don't dent, they die,
so can people in a car
should they hit one!**

The British Horse Society estimates
3,000 accidents involving horses
happen each year on UK roads



Photo provided by The British Horse Society

Some motorists are very considerate towards horse riders, some are not. Impatient drivers are often inconsiderate drivers. Increased traffic causes longer waiting times at junctions which can frustrate drivers. Frustrated, impatient drivers are more likely to drive inconsiderately, take risks and potentially have accidents.

**To allow equestrianism a future
within Wokingham Borough, safe
routes must be provided for
horse riders.**

**Time is of the essence, action
needs to be taken NOW!**

HORSE RIDERS NEED YOUR CONSIDERATION AND SUPPORT

Please show your support by creating local policies to include Bridleways in and around new housing developments.

Please allocate funds for improving access for horse riders in key areas where new bridleways are desperately needed.



Twyford Village traffic lights 2pm on a Saturday

Produced by :
Wokingham Bridleways Group
With advice issued by Mid and West Berkshire Local Access Forum

Written by :
Nicola Greenwood BHSII reg'd UKCC3
BHS Access and Bridleways Officer Wokingham

1/2/2015

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PLEASE HELP IMPROVE EQUESTRIAN ACCESS

Recreational riding of horses in Wokingham Borough is threatened by *increased development* and the *additional traffic* the new developments will bring.



Arborfield Village roundabout (A327) 11am on a Monday

In some parishes horse riders are using main A and B roads to access the off road routes that are available to them. Without an increase in safer routes, horse riding in Wokingham Borough will become severely compromised.

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The Fight to Ride

Wokingham Borough currently has a flourishing Equestrian community. This includes Wokingham Pony Club, Wokingham and Bearwood Riding Club, Hurst Riders Club and Farley Hall Riding Club. It also has a large number of livery yards, many of which offer jobs and apprenticeship placements.

The British Horse Society confirms there are **2,228 horses registered to owners within the Wokingham Borough** (excluding race horses).

A survey conducted from September to December 2014, showed that **horse riding and its associated businesses contribute over £12 million per annum into the economy of Wokingham Borough.**



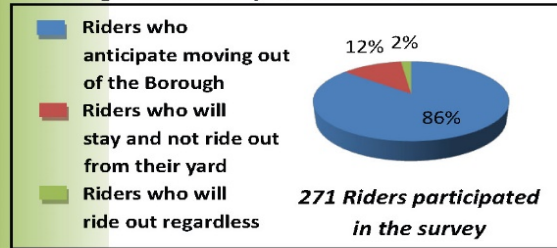
The facts and figures show that the large amount of **planned new development in the Borough (13,000 houses)** will adversely affect the future of equestrianism in Wokingham Borough. This would cause:

- limited diversity of sports available
- the demise of local charities and clubs
- reduced social diversity
- restricted enjoyment of the countryside
- fewer jobs within the rural communities

Facts and Figures

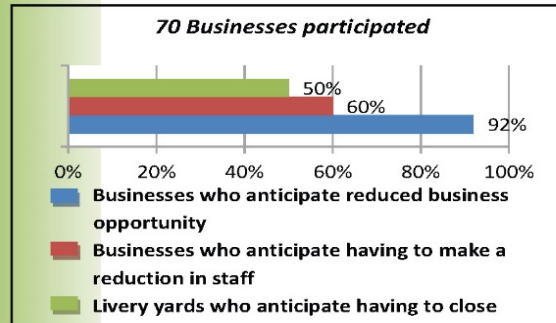
100% of riders believe increased traffic from the developments will make riding out from their yard significantly more dangerous.

86% of riders anticipate moving out of the Borough to find livery for their horse.



100% of Businesses agree that without more Bridleways horse owners are likely to choose livery outside the Borough.

92% of Business owners anticipate reduced business opportunity.



If 86% of the 2,228 riders move their horses out of the Borough, the economic input into the local economy will fall by an estimated £10.5 million.

Solutions

In Wokingham Borough, **Bridleways make up only 10% of the rights of way.** To meet with the expectations of the Rights Of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) this needs to significantly increase. ROWIP states that even the national average of 22% is not enough. The Wokingham Greenways plan can help, but no guarantees have been made that horse riders will be included in this scheme.



Riders in Wokingham Borough desperately need your help and support to save their community

- In key areas, some **footpaths could be upgraded to Bridleway classification** to provide some much needed immediate improvements.
- **Creating links between existing Bridleways** will help horse riders avoid the main roads.
- It is essential that **Bridleways are also incorporated into development plans** especially in the more rural areas of the Borough e.g. Arborfield and Finchampstead.

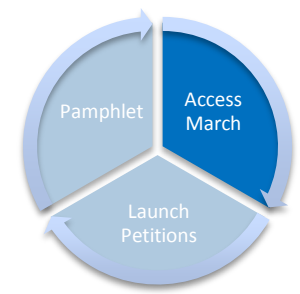
Bridleways and Byways will not only provide for horse riders but also for walkers and cyclists and thus make provision for ALL recreational users.

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Access March

Wokingham Town Centre



- Obtain permission from Council and Police
 - It is essential that only positive press is gained from this!
 - Peaceful not protest!
 - Planned route with minimal time spent on main roads
 - Press release ahead of the day
 - Known horses/riders, competent and safe/quiet
 - Riders and helpers representing every Parish/local equestrian organisation
 - Stewards on each main entrance to the Town
 - Safety card, First Aiders, Vets, Risk Assessment, and Insurance

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Access March Route map

Equestrian Access March
route 27th May 2015



Key

-  **March route**
- S** **Stewards**
- P** **Parking**
- WC** **Public Toilets**
- 1** **Junction Nos**

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Equestrian Access March

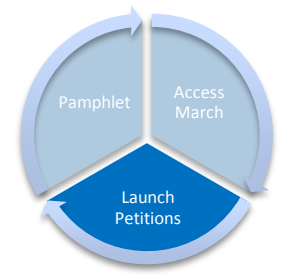
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gAuNUZ7_IQ



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Launch Petitions

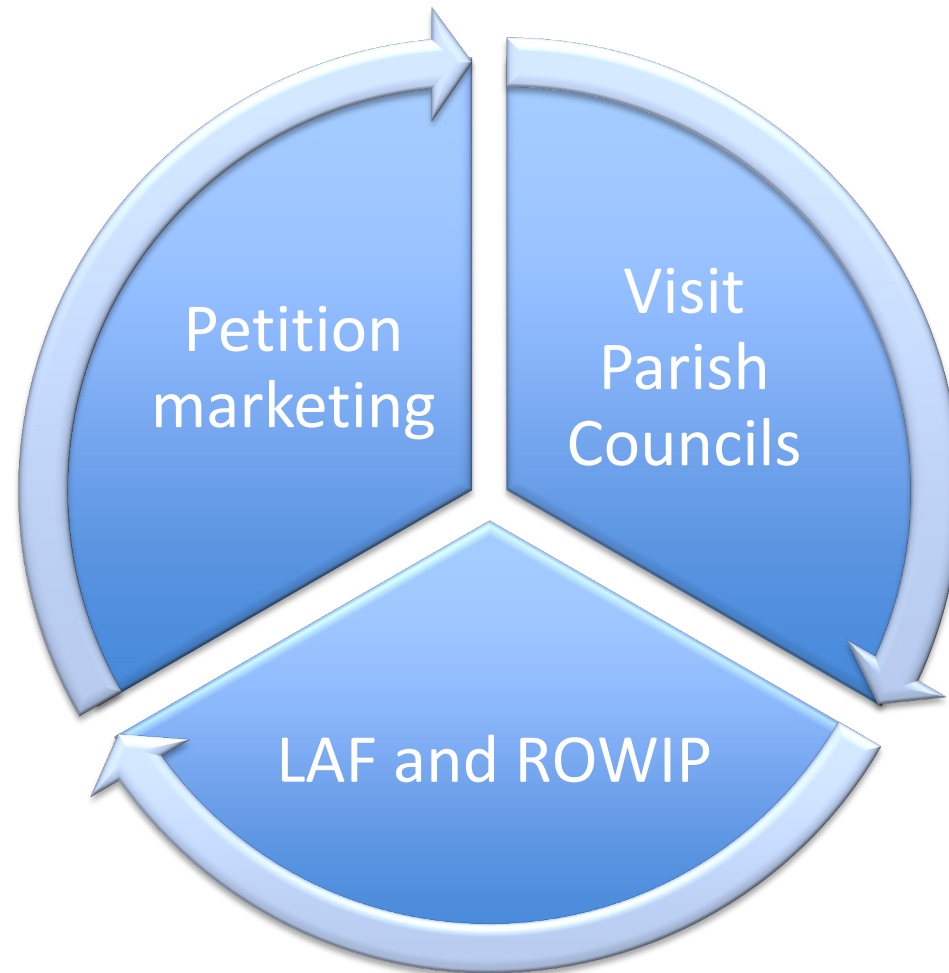
UK and Local



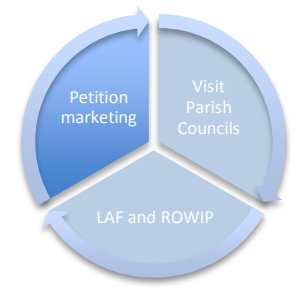
- UK
- Change.org
- Petitioning the Government for an increase to 30% of the rights of way network to become bridleways in every Borough by 2030
- 100,000 signatures needed
- www.routes-for-all.co.uk
- Local
- Council own E-petitions available to set up on their own website.
- 50 signatures needed for council to accept, 1,500 to debate, target 3,000 in total
- www.routes-for-wokingham.co.uk

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Gain Support



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Petition Marketing

UK and Local

- UK
- Media, Equestrian Magazines
- Radio Interview
- Facebook, emails
- Another march ahead of May 2016 deadline?
- Local
- Local media, newspapers
- Competitions, fetes
- Facebook, emails
- Tack shops
- Town Centre promotion

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Petition Marketing

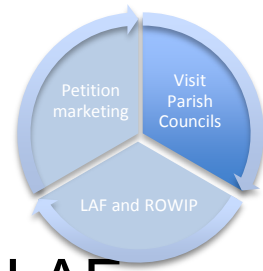
**MORE
BRIDLEWAYS
=
SAFE ROUTES
FOR ALL**



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Gain support

Visit Councils



- Pamphlet to each Parish and Main Council member, LAF, ROWIP, influential people
- Visit every Parish Council and give the presentation
- Many Borough Council members are also Parish councillors, gaining their support is essential
- Form individual Equestrian reports for each Parish Council to be sent after the meeting
- Use information from pamphlet, results of the questionnaire and survey along with the BHS statistics on postcodes for individual parishes, include information and maps on desired improvements to the network

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Equestrian Access Report

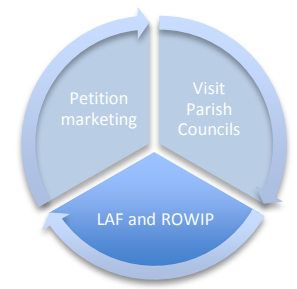
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Equestrian Access Report

Winnersh



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LAF and ROWIP

- Local Access Forum - LAF
- Mid and West Berks Access Forum advice submission to the Borough Council for their consideration
- Using information in the pamphlet, results of the business questionnaire and riders survey along with list of desired improvements to the bridleway network
- Rights of Way Improvement Group
- Advisors of the Council over local ROW issues. Also designers of the Wokingham ROWIP
- Many are also LAF members

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Moving forward



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Any questions?

Thank you

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