

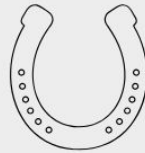
Access & Rights of Way Annual Review

2024 Round Up



£45,556.66

Fundraised from Rideathon and Ride Out UK in support of the Ride Out Fund.



2,609

participants took part in ROUK and Rideathon.



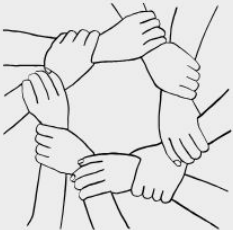
45

Ride Out UK events took place



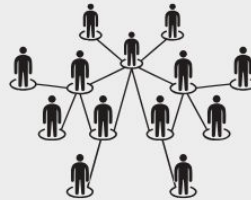
256KM

of equestrian access improved by BHS intervention



266

Volunteer Access & Bridleways Officers



112

Volunteer Historical Researchers



3,740

DMMO applications submitted since the start of Project 2026.



302

consultations responded to in 2024 - protecting, and securing new, equestrian access as part of developments



A bucket load of THANK YOUS!

To BHS Committees, Volunteers, EAGs and participants for all your support throughout 2024

Another year has flown by, and we are now at the end of January 2025. Once again, a lot was achieved in 2024 on the access front and the below can only give a flavour of some of the achievements that have been gained often by many years of persistence and continual 'banging' of the equestrian access 'drum' but it does demonstrate that persistence does often pay off!

There have been some notable successes in the courts and at public inquiries, Project 2026 applications being determined with routes now being recorded on the definitive map, lobbying achievements particularly the announcement once more of the repeal of the cut of date, and so many improvements across the country on the ground.

The team have worked alongside the MOD to create a new webpage which informs equestrians on; how to stay safe whilst riding and carriage driving on MOD routes, what the hazards are, and how to report any incidents that may occur. To create this webpage, the MOD hosted a photoshoot at the Sennybridge Training Area in Wales with the BHS to capture some footage of horses using these routes. We are very grateful for the time and effort that has been made by the MOD and their Access and Recreation team, but in particular the hospitality that was shown to us at the Sennybridge Training Area and the Epynt Way Association Centre.

We also launched our partnership with Ordnance Survey (OS) and have uploaded over six hundred routes to their OS App, of which we're now a 'Recommended Route Partner'. Within this partnership, OS supported us with our annual Rideathon campaign, allowing riders to have free access to the app whilst participating in Rideathon.

Thank you so much for your help and hard work in securing these successes and so many more. I am hopeful that with all your help, 2025 will bring many more.



Mark Weston

Director of Access

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Project 2026

Perhaps the biggest news of the year came right at the end; on Boxing Day, the Government announced that it intends to repeal the cut-off date currently due to take effect on 1st January 2031. Of course, we have been here before as the previous administration also said it would do the same only to change its mind less than a year later. However, we remain optimistic that the stated intention will be given effect through new primary legislation. Nonetheless, our advice to all our amazing Historical Research Volunteers is to keep going with the hard work – cut-off date or not, the best way to protect these routes from obstruction, development or neglect is to get them recorded by making a DMMO application.

Before the surprise announcement, research had been continuing across the country. A further 457 routes were the subject of Project 2026 DMMO applications during 2024, bringing the total since the project started to 3740. We have estimated that that equates to over 4000km of equestrian access potentially added to the record. As anyone familiar with the rights of way world knows, the wheels turn very slowly but there are an increasing number of applications that have now been processed and resulted in confirmed orders. We're now aware of 27 such DMMOs equating to 26km of bridleway and byway, and we are confident that there are more out there which we haven't been able to identify yet.

Funding from Sport England via British Equestrian continues under the current arrangement until the end of March 2026. They remain very supportive of the project, and we have had discussions with them about a potential third phase of P2026 and what that might look like. We will be looking to refocus some of our support on to those with existing applications who are now facing appeals and inquiries where applications are refused, or orders are contested. This can be incredibly time consuming and difficult but is just as vital as getting the original application researched and submitted.

In related work, at the start of the year we were successful in our judicial review challenge of Cornwall Council over their refusal to register DMMO applications unless landowners had been notified. The action was taken in conjunction with the Ramblers and Open Spaces Society and we are continuing similar work with them to try and tackle the failure of many authorities to comply with directions from the Secretary of State to determine applications within a specified period and also to refer orders that have been made but objected to, to the Planning Inspectorate within a reasonable period.

Finally, support for new Historical Research Volunteers continues to be provided through the Restoring the Record programme (RtR) and other training courses and resources. The RtR sessions are delivered by our very own Sarah Bucks MBE and Phil Wadey, and we are immensely grateful to them for their time and experience. This year's programme was co-sponsored by the Ramblers and OSS, and we look to repeat it in new locations in 2025. Our long-term aim is to produce a series of video modules breaking down the

elements of the course into sensible bite-size chunks. This will make it more accessible to more people and also enable experienced volunteers to refresh their knowledge of specific areas on demand. This is not a simple task but something we hope to be able to deliver over the next year or so.

Ride Out UK

- Between March and November, 45 events took place with more than 2,609 participants attending pleasure rides, quiz nights, clinics, online events and being a part of Team Rideathon.
- £45,556.66 was raised to support the BHS Ride Out Fund.
- Thank you to all who have been involved in the 2024 events.

Scotland – Access Officer, Catriona Davies

- Scottish Equestrian Access Training – an annual series of online training sessions for our team of volunteer Access Representatives. This year, at the request of the National Access Forum (NAF), we also invited all Local Access Forum (LAF) members from across Scotland. The NAF had identified a lack of training available for LAF members and we were happy to share our knowledge. All sessions were well attended and well received, and it was a great opportunity to ensure walkers, cyclists and land managers understand access from an equestrian point of view.
- In October, Catriona attended a Scottish Outdoor Access Network (SOAN) Sharing Good Practice event on managing mountain bike use alongside other access. Scotland is a mecca for mountain biking, and it is a growing sport, but bikers can cause issues for horse riders and carriage drivers, especially in forests. It was a good opportunity to discuss horse use with access officers and rangers who manage sites where formal and informal mountain biking takes place.
- Lumphanan Paths Group (Aberdeenshire), who count several BHS members amongst their number, recently approached us for support to replace an awkward gate on their path network. With funding from the BHS Ride Out Fund, they purchased a replacement gate and had it installed by a local contractor. The new arrangement is much safer and easier for all path users.
- In May, we explored another new venue for a Ride Out UK event with 12km and 18km routes around the Bin of Cullen on the Moray coast. 24 riders enjoyed the tracks through Scots Pine forest and stunning views over the Moray Firth. Thanks to Seafield & Strathspey Estates for permission to hold the ride.



Wales – Access Field Officer, Helen Donnan

- Carmarthenshire Path Survey project. This project has involved collaboration with Carmarthenshire Council, BHS Volunteers, and Ramblers Cymru to help improve the public rights of way (PROW)

network. Equipped with a tool kit, the volunteers will record information on a digital Countryside Access Management System (CAMS) and be able to undertake minor maintenance work to ensure access for all PROW users. There was a great response from equestrians across the county. 1042 routes have been surveyed and fifty-two issues have been resolved.

- Trenos equestrian bridge, Rhondda Cynon Taf opened to allow the closure of three level crossings, a bridleway, a foot path level crossing and an old carriage road. Following seventeen years of the temporary closure of a bridleway by Network Rail, the BHS has worked alongside Network Rail, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Council, and the adjacent developer to provide a 'multiuser bridge'. This will provide connectivity between two villages and create two new bridleways which create access back into the nearby Brynna woods. Now work is in place to connect the bridleway, upgrade the footpath, and create two new bridleway spurs.
- Outdoor Alliance Wales. The BHS and fifty other outdoor activity organisations are working together to lobby Welsh Government for improved equal access to our green and blue spaces. The Outdoor Alliance Wales are working on a new manifesto to submit prior to the Senedd Elections.
- Wind Turbine Applications – The BHS has received a number of wind turbine applications in Wales which require a response for the inclusivity of equestrians. Helen Donnan is engaging with concerned riders and other interested parties as well as the developers, surveyors, council and PROW teams. Helen has been involved in several site meetings, held teams meetings for concerned equestrians, spoken at Local Access Forums, and encouraged equestrians to submit their responses. By engaging with one particular wind turbine company, they have since designed a strategic recreational document that includes horses.



East of England – Access Field Officer, Teresa Hudson

- Nene Way Bridleway, Cambridgeshire, had become overgrown making the route narrow, as well as gates being locked, making it impossible for riders to use. On one occasion, a horse was injured using this route due to a metal post and fencing when entering the bridleway. After action was taken by local Access Field Officer, Teresa Hudson, the overgrown foliage was cut back and cleared, and the entrance and exit was widened. This route has now had positive feedback on the improvements from local riders who have used the route.
- In 2023, we received complaints from riders about an unsuitable existing deer gate at Bridleway 8 Shimpling, Suffolk. A site meeting included Teresa Hudson, Suffolk Area Rights of Way Officer and local horse riders, where gate replacement solutions were discussed. In August/September 2023 a new gate installation was imminent, but the landowner decided against it. Finally, after months of negotiation and trials of leaving the gate open, in August/September 2024, the landowner gave a

written agreement for the new gate, and the installation is imminent. Installation by Suffolk County Council will be arranged when the ground conditions are suitable.

- On 12 July, Teresa Hudson attended the official opening of a new bridleway in Stevenage, by the Mayor of Stevenage, Cllr Jim Brown. The bridleway will appear on the Definitive Map as Bridleway 118, and therefore has become a permanent bridleway maintained at public expense for use by horse riders, cyclists, and walkers. The Stevenage Horse and Pony route has been in existence for several years but has not been shown on OS maps nor the Definitive Map, and therefore was unknown to many. The dedication and enthusiasm of our BHS volunteers working with Hertfordshire County Council Staff, Stevenage Borough Council, and Patchetts Green Bridleways Trust have contributed to making this bridleway a reality. The British Horse Society's Ride Out Fund has supported the creation of this bridleway.
- A horse only path was created in Norfolk, for horse riders to safely access Holkham Beach. The horse only path was created with consultation from the BHS, to ensure horse riders did not have to use the busy road, Lady Anne's Drive. The land at Holkham Estate was designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, so considerations had to be made for the ecological impact of the horse only path. Mounting blocks were installed at both ends to assist riders, with hedging planted, and a hitching rail is to be added.



East Midlands - Access Field Officer, Wendy Bannerman

- In 2022, Wendy Bannerman was contacted by a BHS member near Helpringham, Lincolnshire. The member was concerned about plans for a reservoir in the area which would impact on horse riding and carriage driving locally. Wendy met the BHS member on site and was shown where the site would be and thereafter was able to make an informed response to the Anglian Water consultation. Wendy was invited to join relevant working groups, socio-economic, community, access and amenity, equalities and health, and Traffic and Transport. BHS ensured that equestrian access was advocated for as plans evolved. A further consultation was responded to in August 2024 and, although there remain issues to address such as mitigation for carriage drivers and paths to be definitive rather than permissive, it was encouraging to see that the latest iteration of the 'reservoir brochure' include references to road crossings and routes for 'walking, cycling and horse riding'.
- New gates have been provided on Bridleway D31, Keyham, Leicestershire with help from the BHS Gate Fund.

- The BHS, Forestry England (FE) and Northampton College collaborated on a project to install a mounting block adjacent to the horsebox parking areas in Salcey Forest and Fineshade Wood, in addition to a hitching rail in Salcey Forest. In July 2024, a rider with her stunning Shire horse came to try out the new facilities in Salcey Forest, joined by representatives from the college, FE and the BHS. In August 2024, BHS Access & Bridleways Officers from Northampton met up to try out the mounting block in Fineshade Wood and enjoyed a ride together too. Thanks to all involved, especially the students at Northampton College, Salcey Forest Active Forest Co-ordinator and the Northamptonshire BHS Committee who donated £300 towards this project.
- Back in 2021, Wendy objected to plans to divert one of the existing bridleways at Magna Park Country Park, Leicestershire and thereafter engaged in negotiations with the developers, GRP, in liaison with the Rights of Way Area Officer and BHS volunteer. The existing public bridleways passing through the park (approx. 3.8km) are now complimented by an additional network of multi-user routes over 4km in length extending the local equestrian access from surrounding villages. Wendy has negotiated occasional access to the existing parking and continues to negotiate dedicated horsebox parking at an additional parking area to be developed.



North – Access Field Officer, Reanne Benson

- A commercial drone site supporting the delivery of medical supplies to rural hospitals has been proposed near Cramlington Hospital near Newcastle. The site is bounded down one side by a bridleway that was included in the plans as an access route for deliveries. Local volunteers representing equestrian communities influenced the re-orientation of the launch site so that the drone flight path would cross the bridleway at 250ft rather than 80ft. Reanne was able to set up a meeting with the CEO of the company and the Operations Manager, who engaged with learning more about equestrian activity and equine behaviour. Mitigations were discussed such as informative signs including operating hours and what to expect, warning lights to alert approaching riders to launches and the inclusion of a method of communication with the launch site. There is also discussion that the location of the launch site is being reviewed.
- Regional Access & Bridleways Officer, Sue Rogers, and the Access team in Northumberland have been working hard to support equestrian access to the amazing beaches that characterise the coastline. The overhead vehicle height barrier has been removed from the Links Carpark and will be open every day from 6am until 5pm. In addition, a grass field, known as the Glebe Carpark, has been provided, just north of the church for



parking from 10am until 5pm. Glebe carpark is only open from Easter until the end of the school summer holidays.

North West – Access Field Officer, Reanne Benson.

- BHS affiliated Equestrian Access Group, Ulmes Walton Bridleways Association (UWBA), worked hard with housing developer Barratt Homes to create multiuser, Flexipave tracks around their new housing development. The paths extend to approximately seven kilometres through local parks and are used by everyone including cyclists, walkers, people with disabilities, and equestrians. In total, the UWBA has raised around £250,000 to establish this path system and intends to continue its growth. The route includes state of the art Pegasus Crossings and joins existing equestrian routes in the area.
- There has been great collaborative work between the BHS Isle of Man committee and Isle of Man Department of Infrastructure who, following feedback, have placed mounting blocks on the Heritage Trail on both sides of the railway bridge at St John's. This will allow riders to safely dismount to lead their horses over the bridge, and remount on the other side, if they would prefer not to ride over the bridge.



London and South East – Access Field Officer, Sarah Rayfield

- Making Space for Nature in Kent and Medway is working with partners and stakeholders to collaboratively establish shared priorities for the delivery of nature recovery and environmental improvements, in order to create a network of wildlife-rich places across the county. This local nature recovery strategy will be one of 48, together these will cover the whole of England, with no gaps or overlaps, to deliver the government's commitment to ending the decline of nature and supporting its recovery. Kent Access & Bridleways Officers attended every workshop across the county to ensure that the equestrian voice was heard by wildlife trusts, local authorities, conservation groups and landowners.
- BHS Surrey Committee together with the South East Regional Manager and Sarah Rayfield, hosted a "Have a Go" day for Surrey County Council (SCC) Countryside Access Officers at BHS Approved riding centre, Silvermere Equestrian and BHS North & West Kent Committee organised a similar event at Squirrels Riding School for Kent County Councillors. It can be extremely hard for a non-equestrian to understand the issues that people on horseback and in carriages can have whilst using the rights of way network, for example, negotiating gates, gaps, narrow paths, barbed wire, and sight lines. The purpose of the events was to give the SCC Officers and the Kent



County Councillors a first-hand experience of some of these in a safe environment from the back of a horse. Following the mounted experience, discussions continued over tea and cake. Working together with our highways authorities helps to keep them more aware and assists to improve understanding of the pressures on all parties to keep our precious rights of way network safe and accessible.

- BHS has met and worked with the planning consultants for the London Golf Club where there are proposals for a hub for sports and recreation alongside the golf course. As a result of those discussions, there is a planned manège and horse box parking for the general public to enable local clubs to hold clinics and riders to access the off road riding in the area.

South West – Access Field Officer, Philip Hackett

- In Portland, Dorset, the equestrian population is vast, yet there are very few public bridleways. Dorset Council advertised a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) for a former railway cutting claimed as a public footpath (T526), however local riders had ridden this route for years, so they contacted the BHS for advice. It became apparent that Portland was riddled with routes used by equestrians, almost all of them under recorded. A 'Map My Hack' event was held back in early February and a map was annotated by riders showing the routes they were currently riding. Most importantly, over twenty User Evidence Forms were filled out by riders for the claimed footpath clearly demonstrating to Dorset Council that T526 was clearly used as a bridleway. The BHS felt strongly that, should the DMMO go forward as a footpath, then an objection would be made to the order due to the evidence of equestrian use. Dorset Council has agreed that this route should be recorded as a public bridleway, and furthermore, a comprehensive review of riding routes is to be undertaken on Portland. The route has now been officially upgraded to a bridleway and recorded on the map. The Council report acknowledges that this success is down to the BHS.
- Dark Knowl Lane in Dorset was a very narrow sunken lane in urgent need of widening to become usable. Dorset Council had been pressed to sort the problem out, but with no response. The BHS asked for local riders to record previous use and how often they would use it if it was reinstated, and why it was strategically important for riders and connecting communities. A promised contribution from the BHS Dorset Committee of £1,000 was pivotal. As one excited rider said: "It looks amazing and a far cry from what it was. I cannot wait to be riding it again. It has been a missing link in what will now make a fabulous circular route incorporating the North Dorset Trailway, Piddles Wood, and Little Lane."
- In August 2023, planning permission was granted for a multi-user route from the Foxhunters to Buttercombe section of the Tarka Trail near Ilfracombe, Devon. The BHS originally objected to the planning application back in 2013 as it was for shared use only and did not include horses. However, due to the perseverance of Philip Hackett and local BHS Access & Bridleway Officers, planning permission was re-applied for to include equestrians. The proposed section of the trail will

connect to the recently constructed length between Willingcott Village and Buttercombe Lane. It will start at Buttercombe Lane and head in a south-easterly direction for approximately 700 metres, before finishing at the Devon County Council owned track at Foxhunters. This section will follow the former railway line in its entirety, and permit multi-use, including walking, cycling and horse riding. The track will have a new surface, measuring 3.5-metre-wide and the existing ditches will be used to convey surface water runoff. With thanks to funding from Active Travel in 2023, which now includes horse riding as well on recreational routes.



- Strawberry Line at Weston-Sub-Mendip, Somerset is a section of the railway path near Wells, which includes a section of tunnel. If the BHS had not won the planning case over the Shepton Mallet section in 2023, it would have been highly unlikely that this section would have been open to equestrians. After last year's success at Shepton Mallet, this section was considerably easier to achieve multi-use status!

West Midlands – Access Field Officer, Wendy Bannerman

- The North Staffordshire Bridleways Association (NSBA), an affiliated Equestrian Access Group to the BHS, was established in 1991, following the inception of the group, one of the first bridleways they identified as inaccessible was Madeley 1, known as Red Lane. The group have tirelessly pursued the issues on this and other bridleways to improve access for horse riders and other users. The latest achievement is that a section of Madeley 1 that was waterlogged and unsafe has now been resurfaced by the Staffordshire County Council (SCC) Rights of Way Team with a contribution of funding from NSBA. A NSBA volunteer said “they [SCC] have done a great job” and once the ground has settled for a week or two the 2.6km bridleway will be enjoyed by many horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians.
- Although Restricted Byway 46, Cefn Road in Herefordshire had been recorded on the Definitive Map since 2018, the Restricted Byway was inaccessible for all users. The Secretary of BHS affiliated Black Mountains and Golden Valley Bridleways Access Group contacted Wendy, and a site visit was arranged in February 2024 with Equestrian Access Group members and Right of Way Officers. The path, which is over 2 miles in length, connects to bridleways and byways with glorious views of Black Hill. Since then, two clearance events have resulted in over 450m being cleared of obstructions. The Rights of Way team have proceeded to remove fencing across the byway and clear further overgrowth. There is still work to do but considerable progress has been made here with an EAG ride being planned.



- At the end of June, a Ride Out UK fun ride around the beautiful undulating countryside near Stanford Bridge in Worcestershire was enjoyed by riders, who also contributed to some important information gathering. A gate trial was set up by a collaboration between the Worcestershire Bridleways and Riders Association, a landowner, Worcestershire County Council Rights of Way team and the BHS to test horse riders' experiences of using a range of bridleway gate designs. The feedback, showing preference for a two-way gate with trombone handle and D-loop, will be useful to inform decisions about preferred gate designs where there are authorised structures in need of repair or replacement.
- The BHS hosted two focus groups with equestrians in Warwickshire to share their views with the consultant for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) review. 16 equestrians attended the online focus group meetings. A number of issues were raised including clearance needed, how to report Rights of Way issues to the Warwickshire County Council Rights of Way team and how bridleways can be created or changed. Horse riding and carriage driving were represented and the value of hacking/driving out in terms of health and wellbeing. The ROWIP consultation ended 7 April, and the consultant is using the feedback received to shape the final ROWIP and an action plan. This will be considered by elected members in early 2025 before the final strategy is published. The consultant, a horse rider herself, is also the consultant for the Worcestershire RoWIP revision with which the BHS will be engaging. Equestrians continue to be part of the solution in Warwickshire with a further 1,700m of overgrown vegetation cleared so far this year on two bridleways in Hampton Lucy and Stretton on Dunsmore by volunteers and BHS staff.

Yorkshire – Access Field Officer, Mark Corrigan

- Mark Corrigan visited the horse rider facilities at the Upper Don Trail, part of the Trans Pennine Trail. This extensively refurbished part of the trail has been a project three years in the making. Pylons have been removed, there is dedicated horse box parking with space for up to four vehicles, with hitching rails, and a brand-new mounting block. Parking at this site is free of charge. Underfoot is Flexipave, a bound rubber-crumb surface. This surface is non-slip to shod and un-shod horses, is porous so less slippery in icy conditions and well-draining, and it is a flexible surface with an element of “give” which helps reduce impact on joints – both horses and walkers. The Flexipave has been installed as a 3-metre-wide path, with grass sections running alongside the route which can be used also. The project has been made possible thanks to National Grid working collaboratively with the Trans Penning Trail Team, South Yorkshire Rights of Way team and The British Horse Society. The BHS have been involved from the beginning of this project and we are delighted with the result. We hope many riders will utilise the facilities provided and enjoy using this route for many years to come.



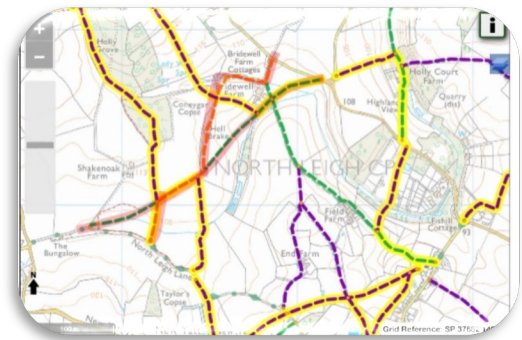
- On Thursday 28 March 2024, Mark Corrigan and local BHS Access & Bridleways Officers held a Map My Hack event in Ripon, North West Yorkshire. The evening was an enormous success, with 29 horse riders from the area attending to highlight routes they currently ride, along with plotting potentially unrecorded routes.
- A BHS Access & Bridleway Officer contacted Kirklees Bridleways Group in 2021 asking for help to resolve a long-standing issue with access along a lovely bridleway in Denby Dale, Emley & Clayton, West Huddersfield, Kirklees. The route was surveyed with the location of issues, photographed, and sent to the council. Fundraising began in 2022, with funding from Kirklees Bridleways Group, the British Horse Society's West Yorkshire Committee, and a substantial contribution from the BHS Ride Out Fund. Huddersfield Ramblers also fund matched the project using legacies which had been left to them. The project was coordinated and managed by Mark Corrigan, and thanks to Kirklees Council, nine new two-way opening, self-closing bridleway gates were fitted.
- When Barnsley Rights of Way department looked at creating a new bridleway using an old railway line in Underbank in Barnsley, South Yorkshire some years ago this looked like an impossible task. We are pleased to see that this is now a reality and has been completed. This is still an ongoing wider project which will eventually create extensive riding loops of around 10 – 20 miles. We are pleased to have been involved and consulted with National Highways and Yorkshire Water who have kindly dedicated a new behind-the-wall permissive bridleway taking riders off the A616 road, along with a new bridge and horse stile which has created links between the valleys. What has happened? A new road crossing has been created. The road has been narrowed considerably, the speed limit has been reduced, the road surface has been treated to give better grip for horses, two holding corrals which are both surfaced with flexi-pave, new mounting blocks located behind the corrals on each side of the carriage way, the bus stop layby has been moved, and sightlines increased. We continue to work with our partners on the next phases of this project.

South – Access Field Officer, Sophie Vagg

- The BHS has been working for several years with members and local riders in Tackley, Oxfordshire to find a solution to the closure of a level crossing at the start of Bridleway 10 which also served train passengers using the station. The crossing was closed following a tragic fatality to a train passenger and the issue was finding a suitable alternative route. There was broad agreement between the BHS, the County Council and the landowner for a so-called "Infield Route", a route some way from the line. Disregarding this, Network Rail decided to apply for a Transport & Works Act Order from the Secretary of State for Transport which would have the effect of diverting the bridleway to a new track running hard up against the rail embankment for a distance almost 1km.

Local riders had huge concerns both about the safety, suitability and enjoyability of the proposal and the BHS were represented at an eight-day public inquiry starting at the end of June, arguing for adoption of the Infield route instead. A decision is still awaited!

- In February 2018, after extensive investigation BHS 2026 Historical Researcher for West Oxfordshire, Rachel Livingstone, submitted a Definitive Map Modification Order (DMMO) application to Oxfordshire County Council. This application was to upgrade a footpath to a restricted byway and add a restricted byway to the network in North Leigh/Hailey, Oxfordshire. The routes were part of an old roman road known as Burford Way. Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) investigated the application and agreed that the route should be recorded as a Restricted Byway of 40ft width. As the line of byway went mainly across fields the landowner wanted to re-route as it was so wide. After nearly two years of negotiations between OCC, the landowner and Rachel, the best possible outcome was gained. The Restricted Byway was diverted around the field edge and along a track, with a width of between 4m and 6m, and the original application route across the field was upgraded to a bridleway. This maintained the integrity of the original historic route, whilst also adding a restricted byway suitable for horse and carriage user groups. The net result adds two valuable scenic rural routes and broadens the connectivity of the local network considerably for all users. A huge thank you to Rachel, Oxfordshire County Council and the landowner for their hard work and dedication to this project; this new route will mean safer off-road riding for all equestrians in the area.



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