

## Newsletter Winter 2023

**Notice of AGM and Talk on Thursday 25 January by Alan Hiscox, BHS Director of Safety at the BHS at the Blue Cap, Chester Road, Sandiway. CW8 2DN.  
7.30pm AGM for members and 8pm Talk.**



### **Safer Riders, Safer Horses, Safer Drivers**

Alan Hiscox, BHS Director of Safety will talk about equestrian safety, which is very topical and many of you will have questions for him I'm sure. Alan was in the Mounted Police for 26 years and has been involved with driver safety for 10 years. He has been heavily involved in the BHS Dead Slow campaign and we will be making a contribution to this after the AGM. Alan was involved with the Department for Transport and many other bodies regarding the changes to the Highway Code last year. He promotes these changes at many motor events as well as haulage and delivery companies, driving instructors and HGV training. Alan gave an interesting presentation at the recent BHS conference and stated that apparently only 1 in 5 riders actually report incidents.

We also hope to have PC Sarah Marson of Cheshire Police Rural Crime Unit present as they work closely with the BHS. If you haven't yet signed up, you can register on

<https://www.cheshirepolicealert.co.uk>

Regular alerts are sent about horse and tack theft and you are encouraged to report any suspicious activity while out riding. You can follow Cheshire Police Rural Crime Team on Facebook. They post many interesting and sometimes shocking articles about their daily work and also post information on equine matters. This is a recent alert regarding road safety which has been sent out by PC Marson:

*'As you know as horse riders even the best behaved horse can be alarmed by a fast approaching or passing vehicle especially if the vehicle makes a sudden unexpected noise such as a rattling trailer.*

*We continue to work with the BHS and work to improve the knowledge of the public of the Highway Code for vulnerable road users.*

*Whilst driving around I have seen some really good examples of being bright and seen but I also see examples of riders being on the roads without any form of bright/reflective clothing. This can put everyone at risk, I will stop and give advice so please don't be alarmed.*

*Ideally two forms of brightness is the best, one on horse and one on the rider. I especially like the horse to be wearing leg bands, if possible, as moving parts often catch the eye of the drivers. I say bands as you can buy less expensive bands/wraps that go over your horse's boots that you may already own, thus saving you money. Christmas is nearly here so if you are short of ideas Father Christmas could drop off some hi-vis for your family members'.*

There is no charge for members for the talk but non-members will be welcome for the talk at a cost of £5 so please do mention to any of your friends who may be interested.

The current committee (see list at the end) are all standing again apart from Susie Adam due to work pressures and we will be sad to lose her. Helen Farmer kindly took over as membership secretary this year and Liz Holmes kindly agreed to take the role as treasurer as nobody came forward after our plea at last year's AGM. Both Helen Farmer and Kath Wurbacher have been nominated as joint chairs for 2024. If there are any other nominations please get in touch as we would welcome another committee member. If you may be interested please feel free to contact Sue Griffiths on 07808 921084 for a chat about what this entails or have a chat at the AGM.

### **Where to Ride**

We often get asked where you can ride and after the talk you can have a chat with us and raise any queries about routes or other issues. We are interested where members ride and the reason we ask for this information on the membership form is because if we get a query regarding a particular route, it is useful to have someone that may know that area. We will also have leaflets available for rides including the Delamere Loop, Aston Ring and the Oakmere Way.

BHS Ridemaps provides a map of riding routes intended to inspire you to explore new country with your horse and this link will take you to the page on the BHS website where you can zoom in to the area you are interested in:

<https://www.bhsaccess.org.uk/dobbin/Ridingmap.php?file=Ridemapshome>

The BHS points out that this information was accurate at publication but you should check locally where practicable as the Ridemaps website is provided and maintained by British Horse Society volunteers. You are also recommended to check before riding whether a route is still feasible as the lack of highway authority funding means that some may be neglected.

### **Bridleway Improvements**

We are seeking any ideas for minor bridleway improvements using the proceeds from our challenge rides. This needs to be a 'quick win' that can be readily implemented such as a new gate or sign. We have previously used some funds in the past to purchase horse friendly gate latches for example. We may be able to get matching funding to help.

### Hondslough Wood

Forestry England are proposing to expand the northern most part of Delamere Forest following the acquisition of fields from Cheshire West and Chester Council as shown on the plan below. Mid-Cheshire Bridleways Association participated in the consultation and also pressed unsuccessfully for the designation of Hondslough Lane as a bridleway to provide improved access. The plan is for the new area to be planted shortly and it should open for public access by the end of next year. A number of new paths will be created in the form of multi-user grass tracks that will open to horse riding.

The consultation response, available at <https://bit.ly/Hondslough>, strongly features horse riding so it is pleasing that Forestry England have fully included us alongside pedestrians and cyclists. More information about the plans can be found at [www.forestryengland.uk/article/hondslough-wood](http://www.forestryengland.uk/article/hondslough-wood).



### Existing Committee

Liz Holmes (IT support) & Susie Marriott - Joint Chairs

Susan Griffiths – Secretary and Newsletters

Helen Farmer - Membership Secretary

Kathryn Steer - Website and Facebook Administration

Janene Hamilton - Delamere Forest Liaison

Kath Wurcbacher - Committee member

Harry Ziman – Committee member

Anna Revitt - Committee member

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