

Safety Proposal from pedestrians, joggers, cyclists and horse-riders to the Buckinghamshire Council Transport Safety Action Group May 11th 2022 at 6.30pm



A. Proposal to reduce the speed limit from 40 to 30 mph on 2 sections of road between Chalfont St Giles, Seer Green and Jordans:

1. **New Barn Lane.** From where the 40 mph limit starts on New Barn Lane, past the double bend and Perkins Elmer Offices and into Seer Green where the 30 mph limit starts
2. **Twitchells Lane.** From Butlers Cross junction, down Twitchells Lane to where the 30 mph limit currently starts through Jordans.

A site visit is essential to appreciate the need for a speed review.

B. Who we are. The Hodgemoor Riding Association is a voluntary organisation improving access and safety for 300 cyclist, walker and horse-rider members and the wider community in Seer Green, Jordans and St Giles. Horse-riders pay a modest annual fee of £20, cyclists £10 and walkers £5, but since 1999 the Association has raised £125,000 through subscriptions and fund-raising events, and contributions of £100,000 from Bucks CC, Chiltern DC and others enabling it, working in close partnership with Forestry England, to maintain and create trails in Hodgemoor Woods, creating other cyclist and horse trails and supporting safety initiatives (Narcot Lane, St Giles, and Chalfont Road, Seer Green). Our efforts enable users to get off the dangerous roads for the benefit of all.

C. Why is there a need for this speed limit review. In addition to the cyclists and walkers, there are currently 11 livery yards, 4 private yards and 1 children's riding school within hacking distance of Hodgemoor Woods. This represents well over 200 horses in the area. Hodgemoor Woods is the one location, with a somewhat limited bridleway network surrounding it, where horse-riders and cyclists can get off the roads. We **propose a continuous 30 mph zone** from where the 30 speed limit ends at Butlers Cross, on to where the 30 mph limit starts in Seer Green, and also from Butlers Cross down Twitchells Lane to where 30 mph limit starts in Jordans. With traffic levels continually increasing, it seems counter-productive that the point where 30 mph changes to 40 mph on these two routes encourages drivers to accelerate to 40 mph just where there are poor sight lines, and then after a short distance they are asked to slow down again to 30 mph.

The map on page 4 shows that Twitchells Lane and New Barn Lane are the two key routes for horse-riders and cyclists to gain access to Hodgemoor Woods either via Rawlings Lane or the Wickham Way bridleway...

D. Twitchells Lane. This route leading from Butlers Cross is much used, especially during commuter hours, to access the A40 and then the M40 at Junction 2 (Beaconsfield). It is particularly dangerous as it has several blind corners not helped by hedges encroaching onto the roads. One large yard, Sacha Hamilton Equestrian, exits onto Twitchells Lane on a blind corner in a 40mph limit. Over the years several near misses have been recorded on this stretch. An attempt to lower the speed limit 10 years ago was turned down. A Bucks Council officer recently confirmed that a human fatality is often needed to trigger safety improvement or a speed review. Horse-riders and cyclists are understandably very reluctant to use Twitchells Lane to access the woods.

SatNav, Google maps and Waze encourage drivers unfamiliar with the lanes to use them as high speed through-routes

E. New Barn Lane. Highclere and Willowcourt Stables exit right onto the double bends by the Perkins Elmer offices. Horse-riders and cyclists have to turn right into Rawlings Lane (to give access to Hodgemoor) just at the westerly bend. Many near misses have been reported here.

F. Recognition that horse riders are vulnerable road users.

Horse riders can report incidents to The British Horse Society: between Feb 2020 and Feb 21, despite lockdown and, therefore, less horse riding, 1,010 road incidents were reported. Of these, 46 horses died, 118 injured, and 130 riders injured. 80% of incidents occurred with a vehicle passing too closely, 41% because a vehicle passed too quickly. 43% were subject to road rage and abuse.

In January this year the revised Highway Code introduced the concept of the “hierarchy of road users”, placing in order pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders as those most likely to be injured in a collision. It gave updated guidance on safe passing distances and speeds for people driving or riding a motorcycle when overtaking vulnerable road users, including passing horse riders or horse-drawn vehicles at under 10 mph and allowing at least 2 metres (6.5 feet) of space. This has, of course, been welcomed by the horse-riding community, but is presently respected by only about 1 in 10 drivers.

It would be easier for drivers to respect this speed guidance if, on Twitchells Lane and New Barn Lane, they were already in a 30 mph limit. The Association fears that, without a speed limit these two roads may provide occasion for a fatality or serious injury to a rider, cyclist or horse.

G. The impact of horse ownership in Chalfont St Giles and Seer Green.

Having one of the highest horse populations per acre in the country (see Annex for list of yards) means that these villages benefit from the economic impact: farriers, vets, feed and bedding merchants, farmers, horse therapists, saddlers, riding instructors, horse trainers. Riders use the local food shops, cafes, petrol stations, horse supply shops. Some live locally and pay council tax.

H. Reduction to 20 or 30 mph in the 2 above areas. We propose a 30 mph limit on these dangerous lanes. If the authorities were willing to make the whole stretch **20mph** we would support such a change. To further increase safety, the Association proposes:

1. Flashing 20/30mph warning signs when drivers exceed 20/30 mph.
2. Blind bend and entrance warning signs on Twitchells Lane.
3. Enforcement cameras.
4. SLOW signs painted on the road.
5. “Please slow for horses” warning triangle signs.

Many local authorities (see Annex) including Chalfont St Peter, are adopting a 20 mph policy. The time has come to consider this limit for these 2 particularly dangerous roads.

I. Evidence: photos and video clips. We have been collecting evidence and these are available on a page on our website www.hodgemoor.org.uk

- <https://youtu.be/EFVe2BFpbqI> Dec 22nd 2019. Riders (Rachel Lulham) on the New Barn Lane double bend. Cars too close and mini cutting in.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9aUiQoEBXk> Rawlings Lane, turn off New Barn Lane double bend, cars not stopping although road so narrow. Please note this small road leading to Hodgemoor Woods has a 60 mph limit!

- <https://youtu.be/K4zxvgTKbtE> Twitchells Lane. (Sheila Grimshaw). Oncoming vehicle forced to give way to speeding vehicle approaching from behind
- https://youtu.be/NTs86QcDK_I Twitchells Lane (Sheila Grimshaw.) Oncoming vehicle going at speed around blind bend from Austens Farm.

For the Hodgemoor Riding Association:

8th May 2022

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Latest information on www.hodgemoor.org.uk





Annexes

Livery Yards

The following livery yards operate within the two villages, housing about 200 horses:

Sacha Hamilton Equestrian	Twitchells Lane
Highclere Field Stables	New Barn Lane
Willowcourt Stables	New Barn Lane
Waylands Equestrian Centre	Rawlings Lane
Widmer Farm Stables	Rawlings Lane
Aescwood Riding School	Rawlings Lane
Oldefields	Chalfont Road
Manor Farm Stables (2 sites)	Seer Green centre
Grove Farm Stables	Welders Lane, Chalfont St Peter
Windmill Farm	Bowstridge Lane, Chalfont St Giles
Dibden Hill	
Oak Tree Meadow	
Hillview Stables	

There are also 4 private yards

The Need for a 20 mph limit.

Local Authorities are changing to 20mph, including Chalfont St Peter.

The following London boroughs have a 20mph speed limit on most of the roads that they operate: Brent, City of London, Camden, Croydon, Ealing, Greenwich, Hackney, Hammersmith and Fulham, Haringey, Hounslow, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Merton, Newham, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest and Wandsworth,