

Response to Swavesey Village Design Guide (VDG)

This response is based solely on the VDG. There are numerous, well documented reasons why equestrian access should be included in protecting and improving access including impact on the rural economy, public money should benefit all users, health and wellbeing, local and national Planning Policies. Should the Parish Council require further details or information, either the British Horse Society or Swavesey Bridleways Association would be pleased to answer questions or make a presentation with a view to working with the PC to improve countryside access for all.

The BHS is very pleased to see the inclusion of equestrians in the Swavesey VDG and supports all the ideas below for improving the bridleway network, creating new bridleways and upgrading footpaths to bridleway status:

‘Section 3 Community input mentions that ‘Opportunities should be taken to extend and enhance the network of bridleways around the village, connecting with neighbourhood communities, the Busway and adjacent cycle routes.’ Also ‘There is a desire to create a new bridleway along the A14 similar to the route along the Guided Busway. This would connect into the system of connected bridleways which is desired by residents.’

‘Section 9.3 Opportunities should be sought to:

Create new public bridleways linking to existing bridleways around the village and connection to droves.

Extend bridleways into neighbouring villages such as Over.

Extend bridleways such as Middle Fen Drove to the North, where currently the bridleway stops to become only a public footpath.

Link new development to existing bridleways.

Upgrade footpaths to bridleways where indicated.’

‘Section 9.6 Bridleway tracks should preferably be hedge lined and constructed over hardcore. Surface should be permeable such as very fine gravel (not tarmac) and edged with wood.’

In section 9, fig 39, shows Hale Road as a bridleway, however Hale Road is not a Public Bridleway and should be labelled as a Public Footpath With Potential For Public Bridleway.

Also in section 9 ideally the bridleway surface should be grass, however if a harder surface is required, soft-edged small material can be used, and some bridleways are tarmac with grass verges (e.g. the guided busway).

Some of the points in the plan do not mention the inclusion of equestrians for instance:

Section 9.5 mentions that

‘Along roads into the village where there is currently no pavement or cycleway, and no space to install one adjacent to the road, there is the potential for routes to be provided along the edge of the adjacent field, preserving existing hedges.’

Equestrians should also be included on these paths if there is no reason not to include them.

Cambridgeshire County Council has a Local Transport Policy (LTP), which sets out their transport objectives, policies and strategy for the county. A sister document of the LTP is the Rights of Way

