

# **Waterbeach Bridleways Group Comment on: Anglian Water proposal to relocate wastewater treatment works 4 January 2024**

## [Who We Are?](#)

The Waterbeach and District Bridleways Group covers Horningsea, Waterbeach, Landbeach, Chittering, Milton, and Lode to support equine use in and around the communities to the north of Cambridge. Equestrian access to bridleways and multi-user paths is an ongoing concern to the communities north of Cambridge. Increasing development and traffic in these areas has resulted in some horse-vehicle conflicts and often the loss of previously available off-road riding. Rural off-road routes between Waterbeach and Milton, and Chittering and Landbeach are non-existent and those in Waterbeach are unsafe because they are both poorly maintained and unpassable (reported to BHS), or they require horses to at some points, to navigate busy roads. Local routes in Waterbeach are only to the East due to no route of any kind to the north, unsafe roads, and an impassable tow path to the south, and the A10 to the west which we are locked in by. Village routes are often too narrow, involve little to no soft surfaces, frequent gates and/or very narrow entrances and exits, impassable river lock crossings and sadly very few routes are circular. Positively horse rider and cyclist conflict in the area is rare. The Waterbeach & District Bridleways group was formed in 2017, to promote the communities' needs with proposed Greenways initiatives, and to use that opportunity to expand access. The group represents 150 riders from Waterbeach itself (including riders attending the village riding school Hall Farm Stables which is also the local accredited Riding for the Disabled centre) and an additional c50 riders from surrounding villages plus the College of West Anglia equestrian centre at Milton. It also represents some 200 horses owned by these riders and riding establishments. Roughly 50% of group members are British Horse Society members.

## [Goals for our advocacy](#)

- Safe and accessible non-motorised user (NMU) access to local rural and emerging NMU/Greenway networks/active travel routes to expand and link with existing rural rights of way network.

- Advocate for equine usage of paths to ensure our inclusion in the decision-making and design processes
- Maintain and expand long-standing legal rights of way.

At the very bottom, for completeness and transparency, we have provided a summary of who we are and how we liaise with the British Horse Society on access matters, should anyone find it helpful.

#### Updated comments:

We positively recognise that Anglian Water's proposals for Honey Hill generally include mention of provision for equestrians and very much welcome our inclusion in design planning.

Our comments here only relate to the document titled:

Ref: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/projects/WW010003/WW010003-000543-4.4%20Land%20Plans.pdf>

These comments are in addition to our submission made 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2022.

#### Specific Comments:

- We note that Anglian Water along with Cambridge City Council are proposing temporary occupation of a small section of Bannold Drove (byway 247/14) and the entire length of Burgess Drove byway. It is not clear from the documents if Anglian Water are proposing to also close the riverbank (bridleway 247/10). For equestrians, like pedestrians and cyclists, the proposal to occupy these routes impacts our existing rights of way and road safety. Along with pedestrians and cyclists we are a highly vulnerable road user group, as specified in the Highway Code 2022: collectively we now carry equal status as. The rural paths of Bannold Drove and Burgess Drove and areas of the riverbank are our member's few safe and accessible links to the countryside.

What please is the plan for ensuring equestrian access on or at least parallel to the two byways and riverbank bridleway remains during and after construction phases?

- We are concerned that there is no planned consultation on the changes to these rights of way and no obvious timescales by Anglian Water of project timelines or factoring in time frames and plans of RLWE station's build on Bannold Drove.
- Please also examine Anglian Waters Mental Health review of the entire project which has not adequately considered impacts on mental and physical wellbeing from the closure (temporary or otherwise) of various footpaths and byways. We are concerned that mental health impacts for our members have not been considered fairly or fully given these two droves and bridleway comprise 3 of only four equestrian

accessible rights of way locally. The emotional impact of the loss of 75% of our amenity (whether temporary or otherwise) is considerable for our members.

### Our position on the proposal

We object to any plans to block equestrian access on Bannold Drove and Burgess Drove and the riverbank bridleway during or after construction phases. At a minimum we require alternative safe provision alongside these existing rights of way to enable our continued access.

We welcome the opportunity to work with Anglian Water to develop design solutions for our members and if satisfactorily achieved, will remove our objection thereafter.

### Our relationship with British Horse Society Area Access Officers

To provide completeness and because while we work alongside our British Horse Society Area Access Officer, as a triad we are connected in our remit but also work slightly differently at the same time, which can create confusion. We hope you find this useful summary below provides clarity.

Waterbeach and District Bridleways Group Chair: Jude Sutton

BHS Area Access Officer: Lynda Warth

Hall Farm Stables Proprietor and Bridleways Group representative: Tessa Frost

Together, Tessa and I represent Waterbeach and District Bridleways Group, which represents all member riders from the local areas of Waterbeach, Milton, Chittering, Cottenham, Landbeach and all riders of Hall Farm Stables on all access matters. Tessa additionally takes the lead on RDA access provision and needs (and day to day physical provision via her riding school business) and they too are represented by us as a collective group. Lynda from BHS represents ALL local riders in access matters and is not restricted to just representing our group. Because of that, and the affiliation we as individual riders have with the BHS, and Tessa's business being governed by BHS riding school regulations, we liaise very closely with Lynda, so that our group's contribution benefits all local riders (including our members) and are in line with BHS advice and standards.

All this means that at times you may see us separately ask for clarifying information, because our official formal responses are submitted separately as Waterbeach and District Bridleways Group or BHS. In consultation communications however, we are involved as a collective on anything related to equestrian access, for reasons mentioned above. We basically come to the same access route matters with slightly different lenses.

Waterbeach and District Bridleways Group Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/191181688055355/>

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Regards

Jude Sutton

(Chair Waterbeach and District Bridleways Group)

ENDS