Department for Transport

From the Parliamentary
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Our Ref: MC/00052075
Your Ref: HW70127

Helen Whately MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

12 November 2025

Dear Helen,

Thank you for your email of 23 October, enclosing correspondence from your constituents about equestrians as vulnerable road users.

I would like to assure you that the Government shares your constituents' concerns about the safety of both riders and their horses on public roads.

In 2020 The Highway Code was updated to improve the safety of all road users, particularly the most vulnerable. Key changes included the introduction of a Hierarchy of Road Users, which ensures that those who do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat that they pose to others, along with the strengthening of guidance on safe passing distances and speeds when overtaking horses and horse riders.

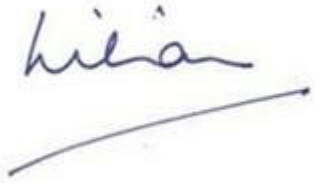
As well as the additional text in the rules about animals' section of The Highway Code on training, there are further amendments throughout to reflect the need to be aware and considerate of horses and horse riders. In particular, Rule 215 on road users requiring extra care has some important information on maximum speed limits and space when overtaking horses and horse riders.

The Government's flagship road safety campaign, THINK!, also plays an important role in raising awareness of, and encouraging compliance with, new road safety legislation, including the changes to The Highway Code. THINK!, ran campaigns to alert road users of the changes as they came into effect, and broader behaviour campaigns to encourage understanding and uptake of the guidance. Over £2.4 million has been spent on media to promote this campaign, utilising channels such as radio, digital audio, video on demand and social media advertising.

We will continue to promote The Highway Code changes on THINK! and DfT social media channels and via our partner organisations.

The Government treats road safety seriously and is committed to reducing the numbers of those killed and injured on our roads. The Road Safety Strategy is under development and will include a broad range of policies. More details will be set out in due course.

Best wishes,



LILIAN GREENWOOD MP

MINISTER FOR LOCAL TRANSPORT