



"Providing horse riders with an official voice with the local authority and landowners since 1976"

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King's Coronation Ride

SUNDAY, 7 MAY 2023 AT 14:30

Rose and Crown, Green St Green



The Chelsfield Park Residents Association

have invited us to come along at 4pm on Sunday 7th May, for King Charles. Meet at the Rose and Crown car park about 2.30pm – just a plod around Green St Green and Chelsfield, popping in to any street parties!

Rosettes and Royal Masks sponsored by BBAG. Optional riders and horses dressing up in red white and blue, Union Jacks etc. We will have some charity collection buckets for St Christopher's Hospice.

We're very aware of the current cost of living crisis, so no entry fee for the ride is required, but a donation, if you are able, however small will be appreciated. The same applies to charity donations. We hope to see you there.

Saddle Marking Session

Another successful session in collaboration with the Darwin Safer Neighbourhood was held on 15th April 2023.



Chair's Statement from recent AGM

Caroline opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending this Zoom meeting, held on 4th April.

The past year has definitely been different and there has been lots of activity within the BBAG committee ... before introducing everyone, Caroline extended her personal thanks to all of those on the committee - all are volunteers with or without horses, and with or without full time jobs. They have given their valuable time to contribute towards promoting safe riding for all equestrians within the London borough of Bromley. Without you, BBAG would cease to exist and even though we do not expect any thanks we do appreciate when someone takes the time to thank us for everything we do so, I am saying to you all now ...Thank you.

Val Bowley, one of our long standing committee members, has decided to step down from the committee and I know that everyone will agree with me what a proactive and brilliant committee member she has been... and although she is stepping down, she has agreed to be kept in the loop with bridleway matters and where possible she has agreed to help us out when she can. Thank you Val ...you will be missed.



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Chair's Report—Caroline Foskett

Permissive at Church Hill (Blacksmiths Arms) - I have been in contact with Fergus, the Farm Manager for the Wades, regarding the signage he had put in place to close the bridleway, asked him to move the warning signs he had put on the path closing the bridleway to the entrances to confirm that riders using the bridleway do so at their own risk. The alternative is to use the road which I explained was far more dangerous than the water-damaged path. Our horses are after all 4 x 4's... Fergus has also cut back and made safe this bridleway and the one that runs along Down Road. Ash die-back tree work is planned on both bridleways and a fence will be erected along the Hill Road part where the horse and rider parted company due to a deer spooking her horse; they parted company and rolled down the hill and onto Church Hill. Ash die-back works have now commenced, Thames Water is being chased to repair the surface.

The Illegally obstructed Byway at Oaklands Lane BY240 – I had a site meeting with Jim Raggett to discuss a possible installation of a horse-friendly stile, even though this is legally a byway that horses and horse and carriages should be able to use. The end result has been the clearance of the illegal obstruction, namely the huge pile of earth. The gap has now been widened to allow carriage drivers to access it. Please note the other end of this byway is in Tandridge and I have been in contact with Surrey Council who are investigating their end, which is too narrow and currently still obstructed by a large log. Still waiting for an update from Surrey. Will continue to chase. It is legally still a Byway and should be unrestricted.

BW 463 Beddlestead Lane to Bromley border – aka Three Fields. This runs from Lusted Hall Lane (Bromley end) to Beddlestead Lane (Tatsfield,Surrey). Sophie Liebthal on her horse, myself and Dawn Gillam met up with Jim Raggett to look at this bridleway which for years has earned many, many complaints from being obstructed due to the overgrown foliage, to the bridleway gates that are in disrepair, unsafe to use and illegal. We all walked the whole length of this bridleway and discussed options on how to make it legal, safer and more user friendly. It was decided that Bromley will pay for the gate in the middle to be moved so that it complies with current legislation as well as the removal of the barbed wire that I reminded Jim Raggett was actually illegal and a hazard. I will continue to monitor and nag Jim.

BR308 – Bridleway that runs from Tatsfield to The Grove in Biggin Hill - one of our members has complained about vehicles obscuring this and I have arranged with the Buki at Traffic control at Bromley Council to install new parking restrictions – timescale for this is 12 – 18 months. Foxhill Farm have now had both the permissives cut back along the inside Nash Lane. The bill was forwarded onto BBAG who have paid for it.

Norheads Lane – Ancient Highway/Byway – following on from someone complete obstructing the access with boulders and earth to prevent all users including horse riders from using the ancient highway and due to face that the initial report was recorded in 2019, my persistence for answers came to fruition when the BHS and TRF grouped together and instructed a solicitor to write to Bromley Council and Surrey CC regarding the legal reasons for the gates to be in situ and in the absence of any legal reason to arrange the removal of the illegal obstruction (gate) at each end of this. Following on from this, myself and Sarah Rayfield from the BHS met up with Melanie Stevens and Sophie Dunbar to talk about how we move forward now that the mounds of earth have been removed in 2023 some 4 years later. It would appear that as due legal process was not followed, the gates are an illegal obstruction which will need to be removed.

Strawberry Fields – I have been liaising with the BHS on the Kissing gate saga that Jim Raggett is proposing to put on the current footpath that horse riders use. I have printed a poster and distributed it to alert riders that we need to upgrade this path to bridleway using Horse Riders evidence, I have submitted forms to all that have contacted me. I am still collecting user evidence forms, so this is ongoing. Baverstocks is displaying a poster asking for evidence forms to be completed, and have received some evidence forms so far. Need to hand out more evidence forms, and keep on it. BBAG were not invited to the recent site visit at Strawberry Fields with Jim Raggett and Melanie Stevens, the Biggin Hill Councilor. However, out of the blue I received an invite to discuss Norheads Lane and Strawberry Fields so both myself and Sarah Rayfield from the BHS had a meeting yesterday with Melanie Stevens and Sophie Dunbar (Biggin Hill Councilors) to discuss the options available to try and prevent motor bikes from accessing Strawberry fields to enable us all to safely use this valuable open space. We were able to educate the councilors on the correct legal stance regarding ROW's and gates etc., So watch this space.

DEFRA have announced that they are going back on their word to repeal the 2026 cut off, this now essentially means we have to put our foot back on the accelerator to record rights of way that have been incorrectly put on the map as footpaths instead of bridleways.

Treasurer's Report—David Atkins

David confirmed the Financial statement. Membership is up, partly because of renewals and a new members prize being offered on Social Media. Committee agreed that David Atkins will look at other bank accounts to get a better rate of interest as the current Santander Business account has a very low interest.

Val Bowley's final report

Over 400 saddles have been marked to date. A further marking session (took) place on Sat 15th April at Hazelwood Eldon Village Hall in Cudham. This was completely free and open to all residents of the London Borough of Bromley. Although specifically for security marking leather saddles, the Darwin Police Team are prepared to undertake marking synthetic saddles, at the owner's risk.

A new safety mirror was provided and erected by our RoW team a few months ago. This was to replace one irreparably damaged by a high-sided vehicle. It assists in safely exiting the High Elms bridleway on to Cudham Lane North. So far it is still in place and undamaged!



Sophie Liebthal

I've been on the committee for just over a year now. In that year I have rebranded BBAG by creating a new modern logo, updated the membership form and produced new membership cards. I've also created an Instagram page for the group where to date we have 168 followers and our most successful post gained 314 likes.

I've also met up (on horseback) with a local councilor in 'Three Fields' to demonstrate the difficulties with one of the current gateways in the middle field.

My most recent contribution has been organising a competition for any new members, or current members renewing their membership.

Chantal Lane

I've been a member of BBAG for about 20 years and a committee member for as long as Caroline. I remember that because she and I proposed and seconded each other at the AGM when we joined the committee!

During the last year, I've attended meetings of Bromley's Countryside Committee & the City of London's WeSt Wickham Common Consultation Group, as the BBAG representative. I also joined Val Bowley at the meeting she had with the police to arrange the saddle marking we held last year, and I cadged some of the prizes for last year's quiz from Baverstock's & Waitrose.

Ronnie Townsend

Organised a successful charity ride for St Christophers' Hospice for the Queens Platinum Jubilee, raising over £500. BBAG sponsored the ride and provided the lovely rosettes. All horses and riders looked amazing in red, white and blue and union jacks and we attended a large garden party in Chelsfield Park. Liz the organiser has asked us to ride over again for King Charles's Coronation in May.

I'm in talks with Jim Raggett and Iverde regarding the huge increase in out of control dogs in High Elms and have asked for signage to be put up in all directions towards the bridleway to alert walkers to put their dogs on leads. This has happened to quite a few local riders so this signage should be a matter of urgency now. All incidents have been reported on the Horse i app.

I did a talk with our Higher Education Equine students regarding their work placements, and we did discuss Horse i and how to report an incident. I have asked Emily Yates at the BHS to send me over some cards and car stickers to distribute to the Equine students.

Stephanie De Vivo

Pro-active in monitoring and reporting local bridleways during the year.

Peter Roper

I joined BBAG as a bike-riding contributor to try to assist with the website and aspects of social media alongside Sophie. We registered the web domain name *bromleybridlewaysgroup.org* last year, which looks more professional. I removed some redundant information from the website and brought it up-to-date, although there is more work to do.

We're trying to keep the website current, and matched with Instagram and other content. This newsletter is my first attempt and if successful we will try to produce a new one each quarter.

