

P-05-774 Pass Wide and Slow Wales – Correspondence from the Petitioner to the Chair, 26.09.17

David John Rowlands AC
Chair – Petitions committee

Ref: Pass Wide and Slow Wales Petition

26 September 2017

Firstly we would like to thank members of the committee and support team for allowing us the opportunity to hand in the Pass Wide and Slow Wales (PWASW) petition in, in person on September 26th, and for allowing us to bring horses up to the Senedd.

We recognise that in the broader context our campaign crosses several Welsh Government policy agendas including: environment, economy and infrastructure, housing, and health. Our key priority is to educate drivers how to pass horses and riders appropriately to ensure everyone's safety. To do this we must also look at some of the wider issues including:

- The lack of off road and accessible riding in parts of Wales
- New build housing estates increasing the volume of traffic on the roads.
- Infrastructure that cannot cope with the increase of traffic, creating bottlenecks, which results in people using the lanes as a short cut.
- Driver's attitudes towards vulnerable road users, not just horses and riders.
- The national speed limit in country lanes and driving accordingly to the road conditions. Often when riders ask drivers to slow down they are met with a myriad of abuse including 'I'm not speeding, the limit is 60mph'.

The equestrian industry also plays an important role in the Welsh economy, along with the health and wellbeing benefits of being active and being outdoors.

It is very encouraging to see that the Welsh Government (WG) has a positive relationship with the British Horse Society (BHS), and is supportive of the work they do.

The BHS has been very supportive of the Pass Wide and Slow Wales campaign. Working in partnership, we have; promoted the petition, coordinated meetings with South Wales Police and attended the Cross Party Group on The Horse at the Assembly.

The “Dead? or Dead Slow?” campaign delivered by the BHS in 2016 was hard hitting and very informative, and they continue to focus on improving safety including educating riders through the Riding and Road Safety course, and encouraging people to share ‘Dead? Or Dead Slow’ video.

But horse riders are facing an increasing number of incidents when riding on the roads. The number of reported incidents is also increasing since the BHS developed the Horse Accidents website.

We are not asking the WG to create a brand new campaign, but we are asking that more support/leadership, is given to enable the Dead? Or Dead Slow campaign to run annually here in Wales. More so, we would like to see it publicised more widely through main stream media channels, posters etc...to maximize its long term impact.

We feel that education is the best approach, and the one that would have the most positive and lasting outcomes. We, the PWASW petitioners would be more than happy to work with WG, the BHS and other key partners to make this happen.

One incident leading to injury or death of a horse, the rider or a driver is one to many. We need to send a strong but positive united message so drivers understand the consequences of their actions.

Yours sincerely

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Ulrike Smalley
Angela Baker