

28/7/22

INFORMATION TO CONSIDER

- May 2014 petition to parliament, 15,000 signatures on paper and 3,000 online asking to include Horse Riders on Recreational trails. The Transport and Industrial relations Committee Report gave recommendations that were never implemented.
- National ride for Road Safety with a 5,000 strong petition to parliament in 2017 has effectively been ignored. This was a Nationally coordinated on road ride for recognition of safety concerns by equestrians.
- NZTA's Road to Zero strategy has NO plan for addressing horse and rider, or horse and driver safety despite NZEAN representatives, and others, initiating contact and concerns to project management on this strategy.
- Accessable streets legislation, sitting with parliament at present, provides the opportunity to update the Road transport act and the definition of a shared path to include horses, also to require local government to encourage safer pathways to horses for safety. This is a platform and an opportunity for change.
- We are ranked equal to cyclists in vulnerability on the road, however we are not allowed access to offroad pathways designed specifically to make vulnerable road users safe
- There seems to be no environmental benefit studies to see how much less carbon is emitted if a rider does not have to float their horse to a suitable location to ride.
- Children are our most vulnerable horse riders and most likely to be using the road for connections due to not having a license to tow a float.
- Councils can restrict horses from riding on the berm of the road, even if this would be the safer place to ride, due to antiquated road transport legislation.
- Horses are masters of adaption, they have adapted to war, been used for crowd and riot control and are comfortable with other trail users such as cyclists and dogs, and can safely share with them. There is no research to support that horses cannot share trails successfully.
- Sport horses (this is any horse NOT in the racing industry) in NZ are approx 100 thousand in number. Race horses are around 40 thousand in numbers. Our industry is twice the size of the racing industry and yet there seems to be no government strategy for recreational riding.
- Sport horses, which is any horse NOT in the racing industry, contribute billions to our economy annually and support many businesses across NZ
- Recreational riders are the industry that rehome Ex race industry horses. Without recreational riders there will be an animal welfare problem. Without safe places to ride there will be no recreational riders.
- We are unsure where NZTA are getting their safety and cost information from, despite many requests for information there seems to be no clear policy, research or strategy upon which this is based. To add a Bridleway to the Otaki to North Levin, a 1 meter strip of grass, we have one quote from Horowhenua District council at \$56K per Km, and one from NZTA at \$250K per Km, and one from a private contractor for around \$61k per km. There appears to be no solid data behind the costings we have received as official requests for information from central or local government agencies.

- There appears to be no Government Policy Statement (GPS) for Land Transport or plan specifically for horse riders. Government tourism strategy does not include horses. No national policy statements that include initiatives for horse riding. The government has invested in Policy and made consideration for connections and accommodation of walking and cycling in urban development but not for horse riding eg: 1.4 Interpretation

“active transport means forms of transport that involve physical exercise, such as walking or cycling, and includes transport that may use a mobility aid such as a wheelchair” but we are an active mode of transport, and yet not considered.

- We have support from Harness Racing NZ, NZ Thoroughbred racing, Equestrian sports NZ and the Walking Access commission for the change that we are asking for.
- We have been excluded from plans for offroad connections between towns in Queenstown, Te Awa trail in Hamilton, Transmission gully, no plans for us in the connections planned in the Wairarapa and many more. All projects receive government funding with no requirement to include us.
- There seems to be no government tourism research or strategy for the potential of horse riding as a tourism initiative.
- There is no National Equestrian representative group acknowledged, supported and resourced to help make decisions around access and inclusion of horse riding in NZ, and to engage with Central and local government organizations around supporting recreational horse riders in planning and infrastructure.
- There appears to be no consideration or central government research about the health benefits of recreational horse riding as there has been with the health benefits of walking and cycling. Horses are used as therapy for many in our country in programs like Riding for the disabled and equine therapy for children and adults, not least the thousands of riders who use this as a healthy, ecofriendly pass time.

MISCONCEPTIONS

People can't share multiuse pathways as horses cause accidents. We feel this is often given as an excuse not to include us on offroad shared pathways however consecutive governments have not engaged in robust research to prove or disprove this, and so are using assumptions instead of fact on which to base decisions. There are many “Multiuse pathways” used both in NZ and abroad that are successful. There is also much research and information from overseas that can be used to support Multiuser use of pathways.

Infrastructure to include horses is costly. We do not require anything but a strip of grass, we can cross terrain that other users cannot including rivers. There has been no formal cost data produced to us on request. There seems to have been no research into the cost to benefit ratio of accommodating horse riders on offroad connections.

People are scared of horses. People are also scared of dogs! People learn how to move around horses if they are given the opportunity. Our experience riding around our districts is that more people love the horses than are scared of them. There seems to be no research to support that people are scared.