

The Senior Parking & Traffic Regulation Officer

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Kent Countryside Access Forum

Public Rights of Way and Access Service
Kent County Council
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Date: 22 September 2026

**Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (2026) in Maidstone – Amendment number6;
Tonbridge and Malling Amendment number 5; and Tunbridge Wells – Amendment number 3.**

To whom it may concern.

The Kent Countryside Access Forum advises Kent County Council (KCC) and others on ways to improve public rights of way and green spaces in Kent.

The Forum is made up of volunteers who aim to provide a balanced view of access issues and priorities affecting the local area or which might influence national policy.

The Forum believes that the above proposal is intended to stop driven horses being raced or used for time trials on the highway. Those who do this are a very small minority of the equestrian population. If they are racing, driving recklessly or without due care, there are already adequate laws to prosecute them; and this proposed TRO might not alter the behaviour of this group.

If this proposal was instead instigated as a reaction to the Collison where three people and a pony (not racing) were killed by impact with a lorry, then similar measures would perhaps be instigated here and elsewhere when cyclists or pedestrians are killed. But the Highway Code puts the onus on the drivers of motor vehicles to take due care, rather than penalising legal vulnerable groups.

This TRO would prevent use by a whole class of legitimate road users – those who take their exercise and recreation (Active Travel) in the company of a horse.

The road is not an attractive route for equestrians, but those undertaking long journeys (equestrian tourism) sometimes have to use unpleasant roads to make connections between quiet lanes and bridleways.

Horse-drawn coaches for weddings and funerals are increasingly popular. These need direct routes on fairly wide roads. This proposed Order would prevent this legal business use in the area. The Highways Code indicates that the responsibility for safety rest mostly with the drivers of motorised vehicles. It is not acceptable to exclude vulnerable users.

A speed limit enforcement on this road might make it safer for all legitimate users. Racing, driving recklessly and driving without due care are policing matters whatever the vehicle and cannot be resolved by excluding any class of vulnerable user.

For further information or consultation with the Kent Countryside Access Forum on this matter please contact Jeremy Boxall at AccessForum-SP@kent.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Jeremy Boxall

Chair

Kent Countryside Access Forum