

Motoring

Horse sense

sponsored
by



OF
WINDSOR

01753 800600



■ **BE ALERT:** When approaching or passing a horse and rider slow down and give them as much room as possible. Always watch out for the rider's turning signals.

IN Berkshire we could be driving on the M4 and within minutes driving through the leafy lanes of George Green, Dorney or Taplow. Roads where we could suddenly encounter a horse and rider.

Alison Taylor, from Old Windsor, has many years of horse riding experience.

She knows only too well about the problems facing horse riders in the area.

"I could be riding the best behaved horse on the road," she says.

"But it's only got to see something flutter in the verge and it could spook.

"My sister-in-law had a car hit her horse's leg and I know of a horse that was killed by a car in Winkfield."

According to the British Horse Society, few horse riders use the road out of preference – it is not pleasant and they would much prefer to be on a bridleway.

But horses have to be exercised and more often than not riders have to use roads in order to reach bridleways.

And at present, many bridleways remain closed due to the foot-and-mouth crisis.

Many drivers using country roads are not familiar with horses and their habits.

Even the most experienced horse can suddenly take fright and dart sideways into the road.

Horses can be unnerved by horns, revving engines, or by being passed too closely or too fast.

Sometimes riders ride two abreast. This is usually

The British Horse Society is campaigning to reduce the alarming number of accidents on the roads involving horses. Richard Hill finds out how we, as motorists, can make life safer for everyone on rural roads.

for a for good reason.

The horse or rider on the inside may be inexperienced and being trained to cope with traffic.

Although the BHS does not recommend this practice, it is often recognised as the safest alternative.

If a horse rider doesn't acknowledge courteous driving, there is probably a good reason.

They may simply be concentrating on keeping a nervous horse calm.

The Institute of Advanced Drivers encourages drivers to practice vigilant observation of the road ahead.

It even recommends keeping an eye out for horse droppings on country roads, a good indicator that there may well be a horse and rider ahead.

The Highway Code gives the following instruc-



tion to drivers: 'Be particularly careful of horses and riders, especially when overtaking. Always pass wide and slow... Treat all horses as a potential hazard and take great care.'

A leaflet called 'Horse Sense for Motorists' is

available free (self-addresses envelope please) from the Safety Department, British Horse Society, Stoneleigh Deer Park, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2XZ.

There is also a video available for £4.99.