

Evaluation of Current Road signs on Rowney Green Lane

Background

The RGA committee felt it appropriate to establish what road signs are currently in place and determine if more could be done to improve driver awareness and the safety of vulnerable road users. The review shows that there are 51 signs visible along Rowney Green Lane of 14 different types (see table). Whilst some signs are as expected, some are badly placed, some are overcrowded on vertical poles and several are redundant. Notably, there are only two ‘no footpath’ signs and two ‘warnings of horses’, none of which are located in the most appropriate positions.

Evidence

Research shows that too many signs can be counterproductive with drivers reading only 25% of signage while driving (Costa et al 2014). Too little or too much information can affect how drivers understand road signs (Kaplan et al 2018) and “in order to be effective, a road sign must command attention, be easily detected, be legible at an appropriate distance, be legible when seen for a brief period of time, be legible even under adverse conditions and be immediately obvious that the required response to the message is clear” (Dewar & Pronin 2023).

The Table shows there are 6 Neighbourhood Watch (NW) signs, three NW number signs and two Smart Water signs. The NW signs are prominent, often duplicated and distract attention away from road hazard signs such as “no footpath” and “warning horses.”

Although Rowney Green has had these NW signs for more than a decade, there is no registered Rowney Green NW group, the nearest being in Bordesley. The very active WhatsApp and community groups in Rowney Green have already demonstrated that they cover everything a true NW zone would do. There is little evidence that the numerous NW signs are actually deterring thieves. Their removal will be a simple and effective way to increase prominence of the other signs with immediate effect.

Going forward

The proposal to remove the Neighbourhood Watch signs will be an agenda item for discussion at the next RGA meeting. If you would like to make any comments about the proposal or have any suggestions regarding the remaining signs, please email us at rowneygreenassociation@gmail.com.



Type	North	South	Top of Gravel Pit Lane	Top of Chapel Lane	TOTAL
30 mph	9	7		1	17
National speed limit	1	2			3
Neighbourhood Watch (NW)	3	3			6
NW number	2	1			3
Smart water	1	1			2
No HGV			1	1	2
Horses	1	1			2
Direction	4	1			5
RG information	1	1			2
RG welcome	1	1			2
Deer	1				1
No footpath	1	1			2
Sharp bend	1				1
Utility signs					3
TOTAL					51

Comparison of Neighbourhood Watch aims with current Rowney Green activities:

Neighbourhood Watch	Rowney Green
Sharing crime prevention advice and information Running awareness campaigns	Three active WhatsApp groups open to all residents Calling Oak magazine Dedicated RG Facebook page
Holding social events such as litter picks, a community café Reducing loneliness and vulnerability	Local events such as park fete, quiz, lights Up Organised litter picks ACE, Sassy Lassies Park group Weekly coffee morning Weekly Goat & Trousers Village Hall
Presentations in schools and work with young people and children	Children's groups such as toddler football, play and create, family activities
Community messaging with the police Flood defence response	Liaison with local police and local councillor clinics in G&T / coffee mornings Safety Neighbourhood Team (police) Active residents' association