

**CAMCYCLE**



**Cambridge Cycling Campaign**

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Daniel Zeichner, MP  
House of Commons  
London, UK

July 5, 2019

Dear Mr Zeichner,

Camcycle is a volunteer-led charity with over 1,350 members that works for more, better and safer cycling and walking for all ages and abilities in the Cambridge region. We write with regard to several serious problems caused by the behaviour of Highways England, highlighted by recent events.

1. The sudden closure of the Busway, a busy walking and cycling route in the north of Cambridge, with only five days' notice and very poor and disorganised diversion arrangements put into place. We only found out about the closure because a member noticed a single small sign posted on a pole near one end of the Busway less than a week before the closure. Since then the messages from Highways England and the county have been confusing and contradictory. Currently, they have posted additional maps of a rather circuitous diversion route, and a sequence of small, easy-to-miss arrow signs on various poles along the way. The route shown on the map does not currently match the route traced out by the signs. We are also still waiting for the installation of a safe crossing at the junction of Cambridge Road (Impington) and the B1049, which is meant to be part of the diversion route, however works on this junction were not started until far too late to have it ready in time.
2. The creation of unsafe crossings for walking and cycling across brand new highway infrastructure, such as high-speed roads and roundabouts, thus making the same mistakes as were committed in the 20th century. For example, the Greater Cambridge Partnership is currently preparing plans to fix the problems caused by the M11 junction roundabouts in Barton that were built over 20 years ago. The roundabouts created by Highways England this past year have the same deadly design, as seen in the appendix, and will eventually have to be fixed at considerable expense. In the meantime people may be seriously injured while trying to cross on foot or bike. It is frustrating to note that these mistakes could have been caught and fixed in the design process for almost no cost.
3. Their refusal to comply with their published cycling design policy document, Interim Advice Note 195/16. When asked why they had disregarded their own standards, the Highways England representative stated that they were not creating cycleways but instead 'shared-use non-motorised user facilities' that cyclists may use, and therefore they claimed they did not need to comply with safety requirements for cycleways (see quote in appendix). We find this response to be extremely

inappropriate and unbecoming of a public sector organisation, which has a duty under the Equality Act to provide facilities that are safe and usable by people of all abilities.

4. Their general lack of communication with local residents and stakeholders about walking and cycling issues. Although we were contacted by Mr John Birchall of the Highways England project last year and assured that we would be included in discussions affecting walking and cycling, we received virtually no messages from him or his successor Mr John Akester. Had there been better communication we could have helped prepare for the Busway closure in an organised manner, and we could have advised them that their proposed crossing designs were unsafe and non-compliant with their own safety standards.

We are at risk of totally missing a once-in-a-generation opportunity to connect communities with safe and usable walking and cycling infrastructure, as Highways England builds out the A14 project and starts on the A428. We hope you will be able to draw attention to these problems at the upcoming parliamentary debate about active travel, and correct the course at the highest levels, before it is too late.

We would be happy to meet and discuss these matters further.

Yours sincerely,  
On behalf of Camcycle

Matthew Danish,  
Trustee

## Appendix

### Diversion route signage on Cambridge Road (Impington) at B1049



Nearly invisible sign directs cyclists to cross road against traffic at blind corner onto a footway where there is also no dropped kerb.

## Recently built crossing of a roundabout arm in Boxworth End, Swavesey



People crossing here on foot, cycle or horseback must somehow dash across 50 MPH traffic exiting the roundabout at any moment.

## Recently built 'minor' road junction near Madingley



Designed for high-speed car traffic, not safety. There are dropped kerbs for the shared-use pathway far around the corner, in a very unnatural location.

## Quote from David Bray, Project Director, Highways England

“The crossings provided at each location cater for the mixed use of pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians and this is noted on the signage at each site. The application of Interim Advice Note 195/16 ‘Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network’ therefore does not apply in these circumstances, as these are Shared Use Non-Motorised User routes and not dedicated cycle routes.”