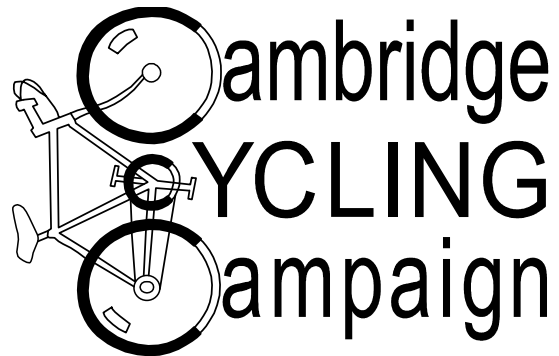


July 28, 2005

Our ref: C 05 022

Your ref:

Pauline Brown  
Camsight  
167 Green End Road  
Cambridge  
CB4 1RW  
01223 420033



Cambridge Cycling Campaign  
P.O. Box 204  
Cambridge CB4 3FN  
01223 690718 (phone & fax)  
contact@camcycle.org.uk  
www.camcycle.org.uk

Dear Pauline,

## **Pedestrian / cycle issues in Cambridge**

We were interested in your presentation at the recent meeting of the Cycling Liaison Group. We share your concerns about the problems of cycling on pavements and the problems this causes to pedestrians, particularly those who are elderly or partially-sighted. I write to clarify our views on a number of related matters.

### **1. Our advocacy of responsible, legal cycling**

Please find enclosed a copy of our Position Paper on Responsible, Legal Cycling. In it, we make clear our condemnation of anti-social and illegal use of pavements by rogue cyclists. (However, we would be against the suggestion that this is something done by a majority of cyclists.)

As we set out in this policy paper, we are in favour of greater levels of enforcement by the police. Without such enforcement, there is regrettably no direct disincentive on irresponsible cyclists to modify their behaviour. Sadly, the police seemingly have little interest in traffic policing, a matter we continue to raise at a national level.

We would welcome carefully-written publicity, as suggested by Clare Rankin at the meeting, to heighten awareness on such cyclists of the problems they cause. Such publicity must avoid insinuating that a majority of cyclists ride illegally or anti-socially, but there is indeed a significant minority who need targeting.

## **2. Shared-use pavements as a last resort for cycling provision**

Another significant problem is that the mindset of the Local Authority as regards how to provide for cyclists, needs to change. Despite the statement in the minutes of the previous meeting that:

*It was agreed that making pavements shared use for cyclists and pedestrians should be a last resort for cycle provision and that the number of shared pavements was an encouragement to cyclists to cycle on all pavements.*

- a statement with which we would strongly agree, shared-use provision remains the norm rather than the exception. We feel it is in the interests of both pedestrians and cyclists that traffic reduction, speed reduction, and on-road facilities should be considered first.

An example of this was the discussion at the meeting regarding the entrance to Fitzwilliam College. We would be disappointed for shared use to be proposed in an area like this, where speeds are low, and when two other options have now been put forward.

Another example is that of the proposed new northern toucan crossing on Victoria Avenue. In theory such schemes should make the crossing easier for both pedestrians and cyclists. Instead, the Road Safety Team within the County Council propose to recreate the crossing with four right-angle turns, thus creating totally unnecessary conflict between pedestrians and cyclists and making the crossing much less convenient than it ought to be. We condemn this sort of attitude. The correct approach is a direct crossing. Councillors have asked for the issue to be looked at again and it is possible that we may in the end get a direct crossing.

## **3. Vehicles on pavements**

We agree that vehicles driving on pavements, as per the photographs you presented, are a real menace which needs to be tackled. Not only does illegal parking create problems for pedestrians, as your paper illustrated, it causes blockages for cyclists on shared-use pavements, and worsens the pavement quality over time.

I enclose, for your interest, an article published in the last edition of our Newsletter, regarding the atrocious state of walking and cycling provision in Romsey. We feel that the current situation in Romsey is totally unacceptable. While we recognise that the problem is difficult to tackle in practice, as it is politically very sensitive, one suggestion is that the amount of parking should slowly be reduced, so that, over time, as people consider moving in and out of the area, they may consider moving to a different location where car parking is more abundant. The current situation, of catering for demand in a way which gives pedestrians the very lowest priority of all road users, cannot be allowed to continue.

#### **4. Cycle parking**

We have long campaigned for greater amounts of cycle parking to be provided. At present, there is no strategic initiative to tackle this, resulting in high levels of cycle theft, and parking of cycles wherever a fence or pole can be found. In some cases this results in pavement blockages, which are regrettable. New cycle parking spaces, if necessarily at the expense of car parking spaces, are needed across Cambridge.

#### **5. One-way streets**

Cambridge Cycling Campaign is in favour of, and has long campaigned for, cyclists to be (legally) exempted from many one-way streets. Existing one-way streets represent real blockages for cycling.

Whilst we recognise that one-way traffic flows may make crossing roads easier for pedestrians, two-way streets are of course the norm across Cambridge. We do not take the view that allowing two-way cycling in what are at present one-way roads would be significantly different to any normal two-way traffic flow. Also, two-way use in narrow streets does reduce traffic speeds, and this is an advantage for pedestrians.

We recognise that our respective organisations may differ on this last point. However, I hope you will agree that there is much above on which we can agree. Collectively we should continue to make the case for pedestrians and cyclists to be catered for in Cambridge in a more sensible, and less conflict-producing way than at present.

Please do get back to me if you have any questions.

Cambridge Cycling Campaign

4

Yours sincerely,  
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Martin Lucas-Smith  
Co-ordinator

# Riding a bike in Romsey Town

It's not the most pressing issue facing the city, but if Cambridge wants to promote itself as cycle friendly then I think it has got to be a lot more generous in providing secure cycle parking for its residents. It has also got to stop criminalising them.

## Cycle parking

This has been bugging me for a long time, and I've been unwilling to raise the issue until I can think of a solution. I haven't, but I can't take it any longer, so I have to share with you my views on the lack of residential cycle parking in Romsey.

Thoday Street is fairly typical of the terraced streets in Romsey. Cars are parked on both sides of the road across the pavement for the whole length of the road. A by-law permitting this has been in place for quite some time. After some sort of consultation in 2002 (which did not suggest cycle parking as an option) white lines were painted to mark car parking bays on the pavement. This has left a one metre wide gap between the houses and the parked cars.

The fact that many houses along the street have cycles parked on the pavement, many secured by loops in the wall, was totally ignored by the highway



*Cars legally permitted to park on the pavements in Romsey cause immense problems for everyone else*

authority in their assessment of what is a one metre wide gap. And the fact that wheelie bins are also left out was deemed to be a 'regrettable fact of life' and an 'insurmountable problem' and also ignored in the planning. The metre gap was necessary to accommodate wheelchairs.



*Streets in Romsey are one-way, almost entirely because of the overriding requirement by car owners that they can park everywhere*

## One-way streets

In 1994 the road was made one way along its whole length, with no cycling exemption.

I've done a count of cycling in the street (see *Cycle counting with a Web Cam* on page 11) and discovered that for every three cyclists cycling the right way along the street, there's one coming the other way. Some cycle against the flow as though it is permitted (and so are presumably unaware of the one way), while others cycle along the pavement or give way to oncoming traffic. The contraflow cyclists appear to be of all ages and of all degrees of 'respectability'.

The pavements are so heavily blocked that pedestrians regularly walk down the middle of the road. Folk with pushchairs duck in and out, finding a way through wherever possible.

When cycling down the road with the flow you are often caught up by a motor vehicle which then seems to pursue you, sometimes gunning the engine until you yield. Most unpleasant.

The so-called traffic calming is of the type that has the ability to eject stuff from

your cycle basket if you forget to brace yourself when cycling at a normal speed. Traffic announces its presence in the road by a series of hard acceleration and hard braking at each of the road bumps. It's supposed to be a 20 mph street.

## Frustration

In short this is a road where it seems that cars can drive in both directions on the pavement (to park) and where there is no cycle parking. The way the car parking has been allocated makes it appear that the blockage is caused by bikes attached to houses rather than by cars on the pavement.

I've tried to raise the cycle parking issue with the city engineers. I have been told that I need to generate some 'political will' to create cycle parking on the carriageway. However, a councillor has said to me that such a scheme could be 'officer led'!

The problem I have is that, despite my grumbles, I do think that the white lines have made it easier to pass up and down on foot on what's left of the footway. On the other hand, the system has totally broken down and the losers are the pedestrians, children in pushchairs, wheelchair users and cyclists.

If there any other residents of Romsey, or other places within the city, who would like to join me in thinking up solutions, please let me know via the normal campaign contact addresses.

*Simon Nuttall*



*There's nowhere to reasonably leave a cycle in the Romsey area*