

February 19 2004

Our ref: ND04 001
Your ref:

Anne Campbell, MP
House of Commons
Westminster
LONDON
SW1A 0AA



Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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Dear Anne Campbell,

Eric Martlew's Private Members Bill on Cycle Helmets

We are writing to you to ask you to do all you can to oppose Eric Martlew's Private Member's Bill to make cycle helmet wearing compulsory for the under 16s. We believe that the National Cycle Strategy Board's statement (December 2003) on cycle helmets provides a very balanced view on the subject of helmet wearing and provides good grounds as to why Eric Martlew's Bill is undesirable. The statement is attached.

We particularly agree with the NCS Board about promoting a safer traffic environment for cycling and that the scale of the problem of obesity in the UK means that the public health gains from significant increases in cycle use and regular exercise are important.

We believe the Board is quite correct in stating that "arguments which seek to present cycling as an inevitably dangerous or hazardous activity, or which suggest that helmet wearing should be made compulsory, risk prejudicing the delivery of those very benefits to health and environment which cycling can deliver, and serve to confuse the general public about the wider social and economic advantages of cycling."

While we are perfectly sensible of the benefits which the wearing of helmets can confer (and, indeed, many of us regularly wear them), we believe that compulsion would be counter-productive. We note that Steven Norris considers that this Bill would be an extremely unhelpful piece of legislation and urges the DfT not to support it but to ensure that it is opposed. This is also our view.

We hope that you will be able to join the opposition to this Bill.

Yours sincerely,
on behalf of Cambridge Cycling Campaign,

Lisa Woodburn