

30th September 2006

Cambridge Cycling Campaign

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PRESS RELEASE

Cyclists campaign for a better crossing at Gonville Place

Cyclists and pedestrians from across Cambridge are calling for changes to the recently remodelled pedestrian and cycle crossing at Gonville Place.

This crossing, which links Parker's Piece and Gresham Road, forms part of the award-winning Cambridge South-East Cycle Route. Used daily by thousands of pedestrians and cyclists, the route goes from the city centre to the station and on to Cherry Hinton and beyond. Those using the route avoid traffic-congested Mill Road and Hills Road and head out of town along quiet back roads and over the railway cycle bridge.



Walkers and cyclists on one of the busiest crossings in Cambridge are now crammed into half the space they used to have.

Over recent months the crossing has been extensively remodelled to allow northbound cyclists to turn right, a previously banned manoeuvre.

Cambridge Cycling Campaign maintains that in correcting one fault, the new design has introduced many much worse ones which cause problems for both pedestrians and cyclists. The Campaign is petitioning Cambridgeshire County Council to make major changes to the new design to correct these serious flaws.

The petition calls for:

- **The crossing to be made as wide as it was before recent alterations.** The crossing used to be wide with half for pedestrians and half for cyclists. Now the pedestrian half has been removed and pedestrians and cyclists have to jostle for space in what used to be the cyclists' half. This is unpleasant for all concerned.
- **The detector loops which change the traffic signals as cyclists approach to be reinstated.** They have been removed. Cyclists now have to press a button and compete for space with pedestrians at the kerb edge.
- **Full size traffic signals to be reinstated.** They should be at the same height as those for motor vehicles and clearly visible to approaching pedestrians and cyclists. The new signals are low level and concealed from view as the crossing is approached.
- **Posts and other obstructions to be reduced in number to allow free movement of pedestrians and cyclists.** A forest of obstructive poles and bollards has been installed.

The petition, launched on Friday, has attracted huge support and has already been signed by hundreds of people.

James Woodburn, campaigner, said:

We have been heartened by messages of support for our stance from pedestrians and cyclists. There are indications of active support from local Councillors. Now is the time for rapid action to put things right. It can be done properly as it has been, for example, at the Burrell's Walk crossing of Queen's Road.

Martin Lucas-Smith, Campaign Coordinator, said:

Both walkers and cyclists have been heavily disadvantaged by changes to this crossing which has been made less convenient and less safe. The early response to our petition has been fantastic. The best way to reduce traffic congestion in the city centre is to make cycling and walking more convenient and more attractive. Awkward crossings like this one do not help. Some cyclists now use Mill Road in spite of its poor accident record to avoid the Gonville Place crossing.



How they do it in the Netherlands: a smooth, direct, and uncluttered cycle crossing separate from the nearby pedestrian crossing

Members of the Campaign will hand in the petition to the Council at

Shire Hall on Thursday. On 16th October they will present it at a meeting of the local Transport Management Committee which consists of both City and County Councillors from all three political parties.

In Cambridge more than 25% of people cycle to work, many more than anywhere else in the country. The Campaign considers that Gonville Place crossing must be improved to take proper account of Cambridge's unique mix of pedestrians and cyclists. In future new and remodelled crossings must be better adapted to Cambridge conditions.

ENDS

For further information please contact:

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Photo opportunity: Campaigners will be at the crossing on Wednesday 4th October, 9am -10am.

Notes for editors:

1. Cambridge Cycling Campaign was formed in 1995 and now has over 750 members. Run by volunteers, we campaign for "better, safer and more cycling in and around Cambridge". Our website, at www.cambridge.org.uk, contains a wide range of information on our activities.
2. Our letters to the County Council can be found on our website at www.camcycle.org.uk/campaigning/issues/gonvillecrossing/
3. Later this week we will place quotes from many people who have signed the petition, expressing their concerns in their own words, on our website at the same address.