



cycle route maintenance

Maintenance of cycle routes is vital to encourage cyclists to use them. This is especially true of cycle paths and off-road paths alongside roads.

If routes are poorly maintained, the surface covered in litter, leaves, snow or ice, or cracked or with potholes, or with vegetation encroaching onto them, then cyclists will complain, be reluctant to use them and may be put off cycling altogether. Poorly maintained routes seriously discourage people from cycling or from taking up cycling.

Regular maintenance to high standards is needed. Surface quality matters more to cyclists than to motorists. Well-maintained cycle routes should be given greater priority than routes designed for motorists.

Particularly in winter, uneven, wet, slippery or icy surfaces can and do lead to cyclists having accidents. Sometimes these result in broken limbs and other serious injuries.

Regular maintenance also reduces the need for more expensive repairs or resurfacing. Proper maintenance is an important factor in showing that cycling is treated as a serious mode of transport.

Cycle routes

Cycle routes are not just cycle-specific facilities like off-road cycle paths. A cycle route is any road or path that a cyclist may use as part of his or her journey.

Streets, such as Riverside, which are heavily used by cyclists are just as important as and often more so than a cycle path. Places like Riverside are the equivalent of main roads for motorists.

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Cycle routes which are not on roads, such as those across the commons, require the same or higher standards of maintenance as they often carry high numbers of cyclists and may be crucial links in a cyclist's route to and from work. They must not be overlooked because they are not seen as part of the road network. For example, Burrell's Walk is a heavily used cycle route.

Shared-use paths, where cyclists share footways alongside roads with pedestrians, must be kept unobstructed



Adaptable vehicles are available which will fit cycle paths. Just over 1m wide, this machine can clear snow, spread salt, wash, sweep paths and collect leaves

and properly maintained so that pedestrians are not diverted into the path of cyclists or cyclists into the path of pedestrians. Cambridge Cycling

Campaign generally does not support shared-used paths alongside roads for many reasons, including perceived difficulties of access for maintenance. This should be borne in mind by decision-makers when planning cycle provision.

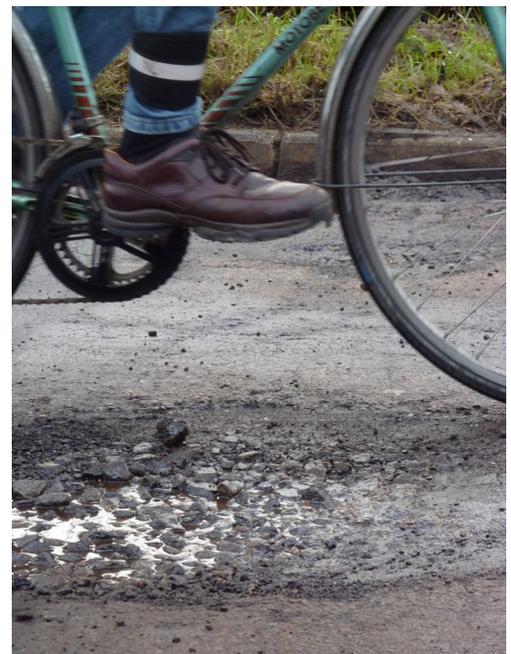
Priority cycle routes

A list of the major cycle routes – those used by large numbers of cyclists and those providing important links, such as the cycle bridges – should be prepared, in conjunction with Cambridge Cycling Campaign and the Cycling Officers at the City and County Councils. These routes will then be the priority routes when it comes to maintenance and gritting or snow clearance in winter. Whenever 24-hour gritting is provided for major motoring routes it must also be provided for major cycle routes.

Maintaining cycle routes

When street cleaning equipment is purchased it should also be suitable for cleaning cycle routes, including the routes away from roads, those across the commons and cycle bridges.

When street cleaning contracts are put out for tender, the need to maintain cycle routes, including cycle paths, must be included. If those tendering cannot



demonstrate they have appropriate equipment and sufficient skilled and knowledgeable labour to clean and maintain cycle routes to the required standard the tender should be rejected.

Procedures are needed to ensure that cycle paths built by developers as a requirement of their planning permission are handed over and adopted speedily so that maintenance by the County Council can start.

Regular maintenance

All year round

- Inspection and renewal as needed of general road surfaces, prompt filling-in of potholes and reinstallation of sunken ironwork.
- Ensuring redmac surfacing, white lines and cycle symbols on cycle tracks and cycle lanes are in good condition, and regularly checked to provide consistent high quality over time.
- Clearance of litter, especially broken glass which can cause punctures, accidents as cyclists try to avoid it and injuries if they fall onto it. Other litter can cause obstructions and be unpleasant (for example, half-eaten takeaways and dog mess).
- Clearance of drains and redesign of chronically flooded places – bicycles are not amphibious vehicles! Also poor drainage leads to hazardous icy patches in winter.
- Marking wheelie bins with 'do not obstruct' tape when they are found in the way.
- Maintaining lighting, where provided, in working order, and repairing promptly.
- Ensuring that signage is properly placed, appropriate, clean and legible.
- Rapid replacement of missing signs and removal of signs that have become redundant.

In winter

- 24-hour gritting of major cycle routes in winter whenever sufficient frost or snow is forecast to trigger 24-hour gritting of major routes for motor vehicles.
- Snow clearance and gritting/salting when snow has fallen.



In the Netherlands cycleways are cleared of snow as a priority. Assen, NL, December 2009. People cannot just not cycle because there is snow on the ground...



... nor can they here. Riverside, Cambridge, December 2009

In spring

- Inspection to see what damage winter frosts have caused and appropriate timely repairs.

In summer

- Regular cutting back of shrubs and plants, especially prickly ones and stinging nettles, which are encroaching onto the route, narrowing it and making passage difficult or dangerous

- Ensuring overhead shrubs do not cause serious obstruction when they droop as a result of rainfall or snow (for example along Brookland's Avenue).

In autumn

- Sweeping up leaves, which become slippery when wet.

With more than 1,000 members Cambridge Cycling Campaign is the largest of England's regional cycling groups. We work for better, safer and more cycling in and around Cambridge.

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