

# Respecting pedestrian space

*Cambridge Cycling Campaign, June 2014*

## ***Introduction / background***

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Cambridge Cycling Campaign is strongly in favour of better conditions for pedestrians and has campaigned against poor-quality cycling schemes that harm that objective. We have been vocal critics of many shared-use schemes and have been a lone voice in the city in calling to remove car parking from pavements.

We feel there may be significant misunderstanding of Cambridge Cycling Campaign's position on the issue of cycling in areas used by pedestrians, in a variety of contexts, and this paper is an attempt to clarify our views.

In summary we feel that, in the main, an approach which genuinely attempts to cater properly for cycling will not damage pedestrian interests.

## ***Responsible legal cycling***

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### **Our policy**

Our Position Paper on Responsible, Legal Cycling sets out our support for advocacy of responsible, legal cycling.

The Campaign supports enforcement (applied in a fair and reasonable manner) of all traffic regulations, for all categories of road user, to reduce conflict and road danger. It recognises that pedestrians and cyclists alike are harmed by lack of police enforcement against people who drive any kind of vehicle irresponsibly.

It is linked from the front page of our website, or go directly to:

<http://www.camcycle.org.uk/campaigning/papers/legality/>



### **Our requests for greater levels of enforcement**

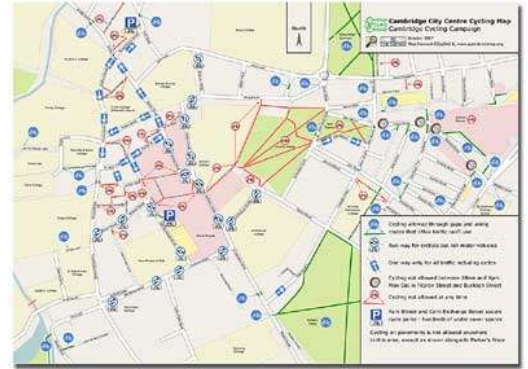
We have continually requested greater levels of enforcement by the police against errant cyclists using the pavement. We made such public calls in our Newsletters, in meetings with the police, and at meetings such as the Area Committees.

However, the police seem relatively uninterested because of resource issues.

## Maps we have published

We initiated the Cambridge City Cycling Map, which the Council now publish with our input.

Our members have surveyed every street in Cambridge for OpenStreetMap, to create the most up-to-date and clear map of exactly where cycling is permitted, meaning that many mobile phone and website maps have access to this data.



We also produce a City Centre Cycling Map, and distributed 60,000 copies around Cambridge. This map is online at:

<http://www.camcycle.org.uk/resources/citycentre/>

and represents the clearest map yet published showing where people can and can't legally cycle.

## Our view on how best to provide for cyclists on general streets

### Our policy

It has long been a central tenet of our Campaign that the best way to provide for cycling is to make the on-road environment safe and convenient for cycling as the highest priority, by providing dedicated space on the road, not shared pavements.

In our Manifesto, published in 1995, we state:

*"The most important way is to reduce the speed and volume of motor traffic. Another is to design the road layout to minimize conflict between cyclists and other road users."*

*"In some places it will, however, be appropriate to provide specific facilities for cyclists. It is important that such facilities are well-planned, well-designed and well-made. Poor quality facilities, or facilities in the wrong place, are at best a waste of money and at worst can be downright dangerous."*

*"If, in order to provide for cyclists, additional road space is needed, then this should be taken from motor traffic rather than from pedestrians. Current practice is usually the opposite."*

*"Cycle tracks should only be shared with pedestrians if: (i) they are wide enough and (ii) both cycle and pedestrian traffic is low enough. This is not the case with many such facilities in Cambridge."*

This remains our policy.



We repeated the same theme in our 'Cycling 2020' vision document:

*"The first priority is to make the roads as cycle-friendly as possible before considering forcing cyclists onto pavements."*

## What measures this requires in practice

In practice this means:

- Dedicated cycle tracks, separated from both pedestrians and motor vehicles. Our document, 'Making Space for Cycling' outlines this in detail.
- Roads designed to foster slower speeds
- Enforcement against traffic offences by all classes of road user
- Avoiding high-volume, high-speed roundabouts and circulatory schemes
- Avoiding multi-lane roads
- Avoiding measures which make the road so narrow that cycles cannot be overtaken safely
- Reducing obstructive car parking on key corridors that creates conflict



- Creating cut-throughs for cycling which eliminate rat-running
- Clear signage
- Reallocating roadspace from vehicles, e.g. fewer lanes, rather than from pedestrians
- Where cycle facilities are created, making them high-quality segregated paths, rather than shared-use footways which satisfy virtually no-one.



## Why the Local Authority fails to do this

The above is a list of how to cater for cycling properly. But:

- Good quality infrastructure costs money
- Realigning roads in particular costs money (e.g. moving services)
- Roadspace has to be reallocated, which is unpopular with motorists
- Removing car parking is also unpopular

In summary, it has been easier for the County Council to ignore the real needs of cyclists, and instead to force people onto pavements.

## Problems with pavement-based facilities

Sub-standard pavement facilities are disliked by cyclists (as they don't meet cyclists' needs) and harm pedestrians, who rightly do not wish to share space with cyclists. They also lead to the growth of illegal pavement cycling.

In most cases, the problems with pavement-based facilities are:

- In general, awkward to use
- Poor visibility for drivers , with a risk of collisions because a turning driver does not see a cyclist coming from an non-standard location.
- Shared with pedestrians
- Sometimes difficult to get to them
- Hard to maintain (can't get a road-sweeper on there)
- Having to give way constantly at side-roads
- Poor surfacing
- Bins, poles, parked cars in the way
- Vehicles emerging from driveways
- Not a level surface: driveways change the height
- Not actually safer because more junctions
- Mixed messages: the Council creates pavements that cyclists are permitted to use, but at the same time, the Council and Police say that people shouldn't use pavements.



## Mixed messages

Spot the difference? One of these can be legally cycled, the other not. Cycling is encouraged on some pavements but castigated on others which are almost identical.



## The way forward

We are continuing to push for proper segregated cycle tracks which are separate from pedestrians and cars. We want to see safer on-road conditions with a 20mph speed limit. We are also in favour of the 'hybrid cycle lane' concept: on-road but with an off-road feeling.



## ***Examples of our opposition to shared-use/pavement schemes***

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We have opposed these very, very many times over many years. They are usually the ‘cheap and cheerful’ option which provides the Council with the ‘easy option’ rather than really catering properly for cyclists.

There are areas where pavement-based facilities are acceptable and appropriate, lightly-used semi-rural paths being an obvious case, but these have to be well-designed. Where such facilities are put in, they should be of good width and avoid poles in the way.

Here are just a few examples of schemes in town which we have opposed:

### **King’s Hedges Road**

The changes by the Arbury Park developers have made King’s Hedges Road unnecessarily dangerous. Cyclists now are pushed onto the pavement when there would have been plenty of space to make high-quality on-road facilities.

### **Hills Road 2004**

We battled against removal of the on-road cycle lanes in favour of a bus lane. This would have forced all cyclists onto the pavement. We did surveys which showed how the buses weren’t actually being delayed in that area. We have long pushed for the bus company to provide on-street ticketing or smart cards so that most people can pay before they board the bus, making journeys quicker. 10 years on, Stagecoach have still failed to do this, and the County Council has let them off.

### **Milton Road**

We continue to campaign against the ‘Milton Road effect’ where cyclists are forced on to the pavement because of the bus lane. The Congestion Charge proposals in 2008 included tackling this by moving buses away from Milton Road.

### **Gilbert Road**

We argued against making the pavements shared use, arguing instead that the parking on the road should be removed. Houses have driveway parking and commuters should not be using it. The new scheme is not perfect, but there is less cycling on the pavement. We argued for slower speeds that would have seen even less pavement cycling, but this was opposed.

### **Barton Road**

We have argued that removing the car parking along here would avoid the need for a pavement cycleway.

## **Gonville Crossing**

We ran a high-profile campaign to reverse this back to a segregated crossing, despite the intransigence of the County Council.

## **NCN link – Shelford**

We argued for it being wider than 2.5m, saying that 2.5m would unnecessarily cause pedestrian conflict.

## **Fitzwilliam College**

The Liaison Group meeting once looked at making a piece of pavement shared-use. We argued the best thing is to reduce speeds and improve visibility instead.

## **Grange Road**

We argued against traffic calming that would have forced cyclists onto pavements. Some shared-use remains and should be removed.

## **Hills Road Bridge**

We made strenuous attempts to ensure that the County Council consulted on an on-road proposal here. In September 2008 we argued against a police proposal to allow footway cycling while the works are going on. The 2.1 m wide cycle lanes that are now present have almost completely eliminated pavement cycling.

## ***City Centre cycling***

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Allowing cycling through the city centre has always been our policy and we accept that we may have to agree to disagree with other groups on this.

We believe it has worked well, without the ‘blood on streets’ and other doom-laden calls that a few Councillors projected. There are a minority of inconsiderate people who ride irresponsibly. We suggest that visible enforcement, with prosecution of people riding dangerously, would address most of the difficulties.

We argued that it should be called a ‘Pedestrian Priority Zone’, and this remains our view, but the Department for Transport refused this when it was introduced. We feel that would have made clearer the requirement for responsible cycling.

Inconsiderate cyclists will still go through the area irrespective of its legal status. And, in practice, people often dismount at very busy times such as Saturday afternoons. In other words, the vast majority act sensibly and appropriately. Calls to change the status of the area would only harm the responsible majority.

## ***Shared paths on the commons and bridges***

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Again, there may be a genuine point of difference here. We feel it is appropriate for cycling across the commons, and such a practice has long been the case. Many such paths are key routes for cycling.

The key issue here is width. Where changes are proposed to paths, we have argued that getting a more sensible width helps avoid conflict with pedestrians. This can be done sensitively, as no-one wants to reduce the high quality of our green spaces.

Segregation is not usually appropriate, because it reduces the overall effective width and is visually inappropriate. Cyclists must take care either way.

Bridges are a similar case. We wish to see cycling made possible across bridges. Where new bridges have been proposed (e.g. Riverside Bridge), we argued for a good width and segregation, and Riverside Bridge works well for all users because of this happening.

## ***Our view against pavement parking***

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Several times we have mentioned our opposition to pavement parking. We seem to be the only body to be doing so.

We would like to see pedestrian/disability lobby groups joining us on this issue.

We are disappointed at remaining the only group in the city that seems to criticise the pavement car parking situation in Romsey. We have also been pushing strongly for on-street cycle parking in this area, which would avoid bikes blocking the metre of space that remains after car parking has taken the rest of it. However, progress has been slow due to lukewarm support from Councillors.





## Cycle parking

We want to see new cycle parking all around Cambridge, not just in the city centre, because there is an extreme shortage.

The shortage leads to people leaving bikes on pavements, sometimes parked carelessly like this bike on the right.



We want to see on-road cycle parking bays as the norm, rather than assuming that space should be taken from pedestrians. Again, this may mean the harder choice of reducing provision for motorists in the short term while people adjust. The high turnover of residents in places like Romsey make this more achievable than some Councillors imagine.

The example outside St Catherine's College shows how pedestrian space can be cleared when space is made on the road (though the photo makes clear that there is a real shortage already):



We are pushing for residential cycle parking, which would clear pavements:



But again, this means taking space from a few cars.