



Maintenance of Cycle Routes and Facilities Policy

Both high-quality design and investment in continued maintenance are essential to keep cycle routes, cycle parking and other cycle facilities safe, comfortable and attractive to use.

Cambridge should be a sustainable city where anyone can start and continue to cycle. Well-maintained cycle routes and cycle facilities are necessary for a cycling population. Potholes, ruts, loose gravel, sunken or raised ironwork, damage caused by sub-surface tree roots, fallen leaves, encroaching vegetation, hedge trimmings, standing water, broken glass, oil spills, ice, snow and obstructions such as wheelie bins render cycleways hazardous. Damaged and cluttered surfaces are uncomfortable, increase the risk of accidents and extend journey times and discourage less confident riders in particular. Broken cycle stands and unreliable cycle facilities are unwelcoming and discourage people from cycling.

Policy asks:

- 1. Cycle routes must be maintained to a high standard to ensure the safety and comfort of cyclists of all ages and abilities using all types of cycle**
- 2. The maintenance of cycle routes should be conducted in a seasonal and strategic fashion**
- 3. Off-road and segregated cycleways should be designed in such a way as to lower the cost of maintenance**
- 4. Cycle facilities, such as parking, must be maintained to a high standard to ensure safety, convenience and security for all**

- 1. Cycle routes must be maintained to a high standard to ensure the safety and comfort of cyclists of all ages and abilities using all types of cycle**

Riders suffer when roads and cycleways are damaged, littered or slippery. Accidents caused by poorly maintained routes can be serious or even fatal. Certain types of pothole, such as those with sharp edges, and ruts running along the road that can trap wheels, are more likely to cause cycling accidents. Defective road surfaces around junctions are particularly problematic.

- *Local authority funding must be available for adequate cycleway maintenance, both on- and off-road.*
- *Whenever a carriageway on a highway is maintained or resurfaced, any accompanying cycleways, footways or pavements must also be brought up to at least the same level of repair as the carriageway.*
- *There must be a recognition in maintenance guidance that the safety and comfort needs of people who cycle differ from those of other road users. Road defects that are not of concern for motorists can be hazardous for those on cycles.*
- *Consultation with stakeholders who cycle must be a priority to take into account the safety of people who cycle when setting route inspection and maintenance guidance, standards and policies.*
- *The location and shape of road surface defects should receive more attention in highways guidance, standards and policies, not just the depth of defects.*
- *The ability to maintain cycleways as well as roads must be considered when awarding contracts for highways maintenance.*
- *There must be a simple and accessible system for people to report defects and debris in cycleways and reports must be responded to in a timely fashion.*
- *Road and cycleway maintenance works must not render cycling unfeasible or hazardous. Route alterations caused by cycleway maintenance must not require cyclists to dismount for sections of their journey and should take into account the needs of all cyclists, particularly those with disabilities, or who are riding non-standard or larger cycles.*

2. The maintenance of cycle routes should be conducted in a seasonal and strategic fashion

The type and frequency of cycleway maintenance required depends on the cycleway type and changes throughout the year. The accumulation of leaves, mud and overgrown or low hanging vegetation can create serious hazards on cycleways and obscure lighting and signs. Regular maintenance will help reduce the costs over time by avoiding the need for complete reconstruction. Segregated cycle routes may not suffer from the same damage from heavy motor vehicles as roads do but can require more regular sweeping and suffer more from vegetation ingrowth, so require different maintenance equipment and routines.

- *Primary and secondary cycle routes must be treated with the same significance as primary and secondary routes for motorists.*
- *Scheduled maintenance works should be used as opportunities to improve the quality of cycleways.*

- *Maintenance work should be scheduled by the local authority and not depend entirely on volunteers.*
- *Maintenance must address cycleway defects, remove debris and preserve cycleway features, e.g. surface colour and road markings.*
- *The edges of roads where a lot of cycling occurs must be maintained to the same standard as cycleways.*
- *Minor roads with high cycle use should be maintained to significantly higher standards than their light motor vehicle use alone might suggest.*
- *Leaves must be cleared off cycleways in autumn and mud must be removed throughout the year to avoid organic matter building up and creating a hazard.*
- *People who cut hedges adjacent to cycleways must clear away the clippings and debris to avoid cycle tyre punctures.*
- *Overgrown and low-hanging vegetation must be cut back so that it does not create a hazard on cycleways. This maintenance should be done by following seasonal and ecological principles which work to protect biodiversity while ensuring cycle safety.*
- *Cycleways must be designed to minimise the risk of flooding. In cases where flooding has occurred it must be responded to with the same urgency as roads, diversion and warning signs must be put up, the cycleway must be cleared of any debris once the water has receded and any repair work done promptly.*

Cycles are more likely to slip on ice and snow. With proper route maintenance, people can continue to cycle around the city safely in wintry conditions. Winter cycleway maintenance methods and schedules will be most effective when drawn up in consultation with stakeholders and tailored to the specific needs of local people who cycle. When strategic cycle routes – which can include on-road, segregated and off-road routes - are treated by gritting teams together with priority routes for motorists, the traffic in the city can function more normally on icy and snowy days.

- *Lists of priority cycle routes for winter maintenance must be drawn up in collaboration with stakeholders.*
- *The surface de-icing method used on cycleways should be tailored to the specific needs of cycles. Pre-wetted salt or brine is a better option than dry salt.*
- *Junctions and corners should be gritted and cleared of snow thoroughly, as these are higher risk locations for those on cycles.*
- *Snow should be completely cleared from roads which are priority cycle routes, not ploughed to the edge where cycles may travel. Segregated and off-road cycleways should also not be narrowed by ploughed snow.*

3. Off-road and segregated cycleways should be designed in such a way as to lower the cost of maintenance

People who cycle will be discouraged from using any off-road or segregated cycleway that is in poor repair or overgrown with vegetation. High design and build standards for cycle route foundations, surfaces, kerbs and drainage systems will lower future maintenance requirements and benefit users.

- *Maintenance methods, routines and costs must be central to the design phase of a cycleway. There must also be agreement on the source of funding for maintenance before a project is approved.*
- *The design and build of cycleways should minimise future maintenance requirements. For example, cycleways must be designed and built to ensure that tree roots will not degrade the path in a few years.*
- *Access for maintenance vehicles, both in terms of path width and access point must be considered at the design stage for off-road or segregated cycleways.*
- *Designers should not skimp on fundamental underpinnings such as the sub-base of a cycleway, which usually needs to be quite substantial even though cycles are light vehicles. For example, ground level subsidence in Cambridgeshire has a tendency to buckle and damage cycleways that are not built to stronger standards. Furthermore, designers should ensure heavy features such as kerbs are fully supported by the sub-base, to prevent them from sinking and cracking the cycleway.*

4. Cycle facilities, such as parking, must be maintained to a high standard to ensure the safety, convenience and security for all

Broken cycle stands and other poorly maintained facilities are inconvenient and reduce the likelihood of people adopting cycling as a regular form of transport as they cannot rely on the facilities they require at the end of their journey. People who choose to cycle should be encouraged with facilities maintained to the highest standard.

- *Broken cycle parking facilities must be promptly repaired or replaced.*
- *Facilities such as lockers, showers and pushchairs for loan must be maintained to a high standard. When people are let down by the poor standard or inaccessibility of facilities, they may be put off cycling in future.*
- *Security measures such as CCTV or security gates must be kept in good working condition to ensure cycle security is reliable.*

- *Cycle racks, such as Sheffield stands or similar, must be embedded firmly into the concrete or hard standing. Bolts or nuts are insufficient: thieves are easily able to remove them and have even made short work of so-called security-enhanced shear nuts.*

Text may be re-used under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Licence 4.0

To provide feedback on this draft policy please contact Camcycle at contact@camcycle.org.uk