

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Department for Transport
Great Minster House
Horseferry Road
Westminster
LONDON
SW1P 4DR

14th October 2020

The Buckinghamshire Local Access Forum is an independent, statutory advisory body on all matters relating to countryside access, with 13 members representing a wide range of interests including farmers, landowners, walkers, cyclists, equestrians, parish councils, National Trust and those with disabilities.

Review of The Highway Code to improve road safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders

Dear Sir/Madam,

The above matter has been addressed by way of written representations by members of the Local Access Forum outside our normal meeting program. Comments have been made by our members representing: (i) horse riding / deaf and hearing impaired; (ii) cycling; and (iii) disabled access. Please note the following comments.

(i) Horse riding / deaf and hearing impaired

Rule 63 - This rule recommends that all cycles should be fitted with a cycle bell and this should be rung or cyclists should call out politely. Cycle bells are high frequency and most hearing impaired people may find it hard to hear them as they generally have high frequency hearing loss. Calling out 'Hi' is a much better option and will alert most hearing impaired people to the presence of a cyclist. It should be noted that 1 in 7 have a significant hearing loss and 1 in 3 aged over 60.

Rule 66 - recommends: '*be considerate of other road users, particularly blind and partially sighted pedestrians, for example by calling out or ringing your bell*'. Again, calling out is a much better option than ringing a bell and mention should be made of deaf and hearing impaired people.

Rule 163 – cyclists should pass slow moving traffic on left or right. This can be dangerous as the driver may not be aware of their presence. Pedestrians may be caught out as they do not expect vehicles to be overtaken from the inside especially if they are crossing in front of slow moving vehicles.

If slow moving traffic is taken as including pedestrians and horse riders there are several matters to be considered. Clarity is needed to ensure this *doesn't* mean cyclists overtaking horse riders on the left, as this would be unexpected. On becoming aware of the presence of a cyclist, horse riders automatically move left towards the verge to make way for the cyclists, so horse riders need certainty cyclists will only pass on the right.

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Leave a minimum distance of 1.5m when travelling at under 30 mph. This is not possible on some rural single track roads which may only be 4m wide, so may need clarifying.

(ii) Cycling

Rule 66

This item is confusing:

"• update Rule 66 to ensure cyclists are considerate towards horse riders, along with the following text":

"cyclists should ride in single file when drivers wish to overtake and it is safe to let them do so. When riding in larger groups on narrow lanes, it is sometimes safer to ride two abreast"

Please correct the Rules / Recommended Actions in these two paragraphs, they are inconsistent – the updated rule summary refers to cyclists being considerate to horses; whereas the amendment refers to cyclists maintaining a single file when drivers wish to overtake.

Please clarify any new rules for cycling in groups when drivers want to overtake and along narrow lanes. The recommendation to ride two abreast along narrow lanes is questionable.

(iii) Disabled Access

All conditions that apply to cyclists should also apply for users of mobility scooters when using the vehicular highway. It would be helpful to clarify motor vehicles should also pass mobility scooters at a comfortable width as they can travel with the flow of traffic on country lanes (absent of footways) or sometimes against the flow.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Richard Pushman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial "R" and a long, sweeping underline.

Richard Pushman (Chairman)