



## WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

**DATE:** 2 DECEMBER 2015  
**SUBJECT:** WRITTEN PUBLIC QUESTIONS  
**DIVISION:** WOKING

### 1. Question from Alan Blackburn

#### **Inconsiderate Cycling An Unwanted Legacy of Cycle Woking**

I previously emailed all Woking Borough Council and Surrey County Councillors on 24/10/15 on the subject of inconsiderate cycling on the footways and public spaces of Woking. I have received a reply from Mr Morgan who explained the reasoning around the delay in signage regarding cycling in the town centre. He also said that a positive campaign will be run to promote responsible cycling.

Apart from the Town Centre, I would also like to complain about the inconsiderate people who ride on normal non shared footways, who ride too fast and pass one too close in particular when coming from behind.

Could I ask the Chairman to consider the following?

1. That there be no further extension of the 'shared use' of pavements in the town centre and that cycling be banned from 'Market Walk' whenever it is in use as a market.

That public notices are fixed in close proximity to all the cycle parks and other areas as appropriate and advertising space in the local newspapers is used to emphasise the following four points:

1. That pedestrians always take preference over Cyclists (DfT Hierarchy of use)
2. That cycling on a pavement is in general against the Law. It may only be done on those pavements which have been designated for 'Shared Use' and are appropriately signed
3. That cyclists should not attempt to pass a pedestrian unless there is a clear space of at least 1m between them, and ring their bell at least twice, the pedestrian may well be deaf. If there is no reaction then you must dismount to pass them
4. That cyclists should not exceed a speed of 8mph when using a pavement.

Concerning the last point despite the vast amount of guidance given by the DfT on most aspects of cycling, nothing is said about speed anywhere. I suggest 8mph as

this is the maximum speed allowed for disability vehicles and it may require a Bye Law.

**Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:**

Although Cycle Woking has played an active part in encouraging and promoting cycling as an activity, it is not reasonable to assume that inconsiderate behaviour is as a result of this work. It is recognised that there are a small minority of cyclists who do not conduct themselves in a manner that shows consideration for other highway user groups. However, it is also important to recognise that examples of inconsiderate behaviour can be found in all highway user groups, including motorists and pedestrians, and that inconsiderate behaviour is in no way solely attributed to cyclists.

All shared use areas are considered on a case by case basis through the Woking Joint Committee, and the Committee will make its decision taking into account the views that are received through the statutory consultation process. For that reason it is not possible to commit in advance to prevention of additional shared use facilities in any area of the Woking Borough.

Having consulted both Surrey Highways, and Surrey Police, with regard to your proposals for addressing inconsiderate behaviour, I am afraid that none of these would be supported. Surrey Police, who are responsible for enforcement, have indicated that it would be impractical to implement enforcement of any minimum passing distance or speed limit, as these things could not readily be measured, would be contested by any cyclist challenged, and would be difficult to prove in Court. It is also the case that it would be very difficult for a cyclist to judge their speed or distance to this accuracy, and arguably unreasonable to impose such impractical constraints targeted at this one user group.

Although riding on the pavement is illegal and became a fixed penalty offence in 1999, the advice issued to the Police by the Home Office stated that "*the fixed penalty is not aimed at responsible cyclists who sometimes feel obliged to use the pavement out of fear of the traffic, and who show consideration to other pavement users. Chief police officers, who are responsible for enforcement, acknowledge that many cyclists, particularly children and young people, are afraid to cycle on the road. Sensitivity and careful use of police discretion is required.*"

Market research undertaken in Surrey to assess people's attitudes towards cycling found that one of the biggest barriers to encouraging more cycling by more people is the fear of sharing busy roads with heavy traffic flows. Consequently a key part of Surrey's cycling strategy is wherever possible to provide cycling facilities segregated from traffic to ensure that younger people, older people and people who would not otherwise cycle are able choose to cycle segregated from traffic. Utilising wide pavements and designating them for shared use between pedestrians and cyclists is a standard method of providing a cycling facility segregated from traffic and there are a number of national design guidelines available including those published by the Department for Transport, Transport for London and Sustrans advising on this. National guidance highlights the need to take into account for the needs of other road users (especially pedestrians) when providing shared use facilities, and only paths with suitable widths (depending upon the level of pedestrian and cyclist activity) should be designated as shared use. Therefore it is intended that shared use cycling facilities will continue to be used in Surrey, and taking into account the

needs of pedestrians within the design will continue to be an important part of this. All highway improvements are also subject to safety audit at the design stage and after implementation.

Analysis of Surrey's database of road casualties recorded by the police showed that in 2013 there were 362 pedestrian casualties, 11 of which were as a result of collision with a cyclist, of which 3 involved the cyclist riding illegally on the footway. There were no recorded injuries to pedestrians as a result of collisions with cyclists on paths designated as shared use. Although there may be incidents that are not reported to the police, the risk of being injured by a cyclist as a pedestrian is extremely small. None-the-less the fear of being knocked over by a cyclist can be a real concern for some people especially older people or those with mobility impairment.

Surrey Highways and Surrey Police continue to work closely together to address all aspects of road safety, and will target resources where they will provide the greatest public benefit. As accidents involving motor vehicles remain the highest risk in terms of leading to serious or fatal injuries, enforcement and other control measures will continue to be focused primarily on this area.

For Woking Town centre, works are in hand to implement the 10am to 4pm cycling prohibition through the centre of the Town and reinstate the permanent cycling prohibitions in Church Path, Mercia Walk and Market Walk. The physical works are planned for completion from mid January 2016 following which we will monitor compliance and consider enforcement and education measures as appropriate thereafter.

## **2. Question from Peter Bennett**

Winston Churchill School is attended by approx 1500 pupils aged from 11-16 who commence at 0825 am. This school is located on Hermitage Road (A324) with its own adjacent traffic layby for pupil drop off. On the other side of this very busy, comparatively narrow, commuter route is a bike lane and a narrow footpath. Running parallel with this bike lane and footpath is a single yellow line parking restriction. The parking restriction starts at 0830 am. This is 5 minutes AFTER the pupils are sitting at their desks! Thus irrelevant, totally ineffective and not fit for purpose!!

This allows a small minority to PARK, NOT DROP OFF, without impunity whilst they escort their children across the very busy road. The school layby is easily accessible if they use adjacent roundabouts at the top and bottom of this road. In doing so they straddle the useless parking restriction, block the bike lane and also the narrow footpath as the main road is comparatively narrow. This unsights passing drivers and causes them to deviate towards the school's busy layby on a commuting road where 1500 young pupils are arriving for school.

I submit that this restriction is not fit for common sense purpose and is a dereliction of duty with regard to the safety of the 1500 pupils arriving at the same time as the busy commute is in progress.

The Woking Parking Project Team has rejected my request for an extension of the parking restriction to 0730am and will not consider the matter until 2017.

This is not acceptable with regard to pupil safety and I would appreciate the opportunity to bring this attention to Woking and Surrey Councillors.

**Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:**

Winston Churchill School and Parking in Hermitage Road

Since Borough wide parking reviews were started in Woking 6 years ago, this is the first request we have received for restrictions to be changed on this part of Hermitage Road. We have looked at this location and decided not to include any changes in the current parking review report because:

- I. Vehicles stopping briefly to allow passengers to board/ alight is allowed on a waiting restriction. Even if there were double yellow lines along Hermitage Road opposite Winston Churchill School this behaviour could still take place and the earlier operational time is unlikely to make any real difference to the number of vehicles stopping in this location at school times.
- II. If a longer (or earlier) restriction were imposed there could be an issue with displacement. Parents dropping off their children in the morning and/ or collecting them later in the day is going to continue for the foreseeable future. If prevented in one location it will just move to another.
- III. There are no other restrictions that begin at 7:30am in Woking Borough at the present time, (which may be interpreted as 'local policy'). For the general public's better understanding and for enforcement purposes it is better to have consistent restrictions across the borough.

We will however monitor this location over a longer period and in this process discuss with the school, the SCC School Sustainable Travel Team and Woking Borough Enforcement Team in order to decide whether any changes to the waiting restriction are needed or justified.