

Changes to The Highway Code: improving safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders

Your details

Q1. Your (used for contact details only):

name? Naomi Hyland

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Q2. Are you responding:

on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation details

Q3. What is the name of your organisation?

CycleWight- The Isle of Wight Safe Cycling Advocacy Group

Hierarchy of road users

Q5. Do you agree with the introduction of new Rule H1?

Yes

Hierarchy of users wording

Q7. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

No

Disagree with hierarchy of users wording

Q8. Why not?

On review of the proposed text for H1, it is apparent that the text is lengthy and is not entirely clear as to what is being required under H1. Suggest that this text is clarified to ensure everyone has a full understanding as to the requirement under H1, so that the hierarchy is clearly understood by all road users on reading the text.

Clarification of right of way and stronger priorities for pedestrians

Q9. Do you agree with the introduction of new Rule H2?

Yes

Stronger priorities for pedestrians wording

Q11. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Cyclists priorities and right of way

Q13. Do you agree with the introduction of new Rule H3?

Yes

Cyclists priorities and right of way wording

Q15. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

No

Cyclists priorities and right of way

Q16. Why not?

The meaning of the second paragraph of the proposed text (as follows) is unclear- is not entirely clear the type of scenario being described by the text. Does the text mean the driver/motorcycle should give way if there is a cyclist traveling in the opposite direction to the car? If so suggest this text made clearer with regards to the requirement. "Do not turn at a junction if to do so would cause the cyclist going straight ahead to stop or swerve, just as you would do with a motor vehicle."

Rules for pedestrians

Q17. Do you agree with the proposed change to give way to pedestrians waiting at a:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
junction?	X		
zebra crossing?	X		

Q18. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Rules for pedestrians

Q20. Do you have any further comments about other changes to the rules for pedestrians?

Any changes to the highway code must be clearly communicated and understood by road users to avoid accidents and collisions. Pedestrians should still carry out their own due diligence checks when crossing a road to ensure they are not hurt.

Rules about animals

Q21. Do you agree to the proposed change to Rule 52?

Yes

Rules for animals wording

Q23. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Rules for cyclists

Q25. Do you agree with the proposed change to rule 63?

Yes

Rule 63 for cyclists wording: shared spaces

Q27. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Rules for cyclists

Q29. Do you agree with the proposed change to Rule 72 to ride:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
in the centre of your lane on quiet roads?	X		
in the centre of your lane in slower moving traffic?	X		
in the centre of your lane when approaching junctions?	X		
at least 0.5 metres away from the kerb on busy roads?	X		

Q30. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Rules for cyclists

Q32. Do you agree with the proposed change to Rule 73 at junctions with:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
special cyclist facilities?	X		
no separate cyclist facilities?		X	

If no, why not?

Suggesting to the cyclist consider dismounting and wheeling their bike across a busy junction is not clear and could be dangerous. In the Hierarchy of road users the motor vehicles behind should ensure that the cyclist is safe from harm if they were to be overtaken. Suggesting the cyclist should walk across the busy junction with their bike is a very dangerous suggestion. If you are suggesting that they move to the pavement and cross using a pedestrian crossing, this should be clearly stated.

Q33. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

No

Disagrees with Rule 73 for cyclists wording: junctions

Q34. Why not?

Suggesting to the cyclist consider dismounting and wheeling their bike across a busy junction is not clear and could be dangerous. In the Hierarchy of road users the motor vehicles behind should ensure that the cyclist is safe from harm if they were to be overtaken. Suggesting the cyclist should walk across the busy junction with their bike is a very dangerous suggestion. If you are suggesting that they move to the pavement and cross using a pedestrian crossing, this should be clearly stated.

Rules for cyclists

Q35. Do you agree with the proposed change to Rule 76?

No

Disagrees with Rule 76 for cyclists: going straight ahead

Q36. Why not?

It is well known that lorries turning left cause major accidents and be fatal to cyclists.

Previous government advice to cyclists when a lorry is turning left was "The advice we're giving to cyclists is 'Don't get between a lorry and a left hand turn. Hang back'."

Therefore to ensure the safety of the cyclist, Rule 76 should be in line with the advice as previously set out by the government.

For further information please see this link: <https://movingon.blog.gov.uk/2016/10/13/lorry-drivers-think-cyclist-when-turning-left/>

Rule 76 for cyclists wording: going straight ahead

Q37. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

No

Disagrees with Rule 76 for cyclists wording: going straight ahead

Q38. Why not?

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Previous government advice to cyclists when a lorry is turning left was "The advice we're giving to cyclists is 'Don't get between a lorry and a left hand turn. Hang back'."

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Rules for cyclists

Q39. Do you have any further comments about other changes to the rules for cyclists?

Rule 66.

CycleWight agrees with CyclingUK that the new proposals could be misinterpreted by some people as a rule suggesting that cyclists should always single out when a driver wants to overtake – or where a driver thinks it is safe to overtake, rather than when the cyclist chooses to single out because they think it's safe to be overtaken.

CycleWight therefore support CyclingUK who are proposing different wording, and a new rule that: "[cyclists' should] be considerate of the needs of other road users when riding with another and in small or large groups. You can ride two abreast and it is often safer to do so, particularly in larger groups or when accompanying children or less experienced riders. Switch to single file if you consider it safer to allow drivers to overtake."

Instead of commanding when to ride single file, this wording makes it clear that you can ride two abreast, and immediately highlights reasons where this can be safer. It then suggests riding in single file only where you – the cyclist – consider it safe to allow drivers to overtake.

This wording retains the core intention of the DfT's proposals, that cyclists can ride two abreast, that this can be safer in certain circumstances, and that you should only single out when it is safe to allow overtaking, but is clearer and less likely to be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

Rule 77.

This rule suggests that it maybe safer to dismount and push the bicycle across a junction. As mentioned previously, this advice is unclear- should the cyclist cross in the junction itself or move to the pavement and cross safely using a pedestrian crossing?

Rules for drivers and motorcyclists

Q40. Do you have any comments about the proposed change to Rule 97?

N/A

General rules, techniques and advice for all drivers and riders

Q41. Is the proposed wording in Rule:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
123 easy to understand?	X		
124 easy to understand?	X		

General rules, techniques and advice for all drivers and riders

Q42. Do you agree with the proposed changes to Rule 140 on giving way to cyclists using a cycle:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
lane?	X		
track?	X		

Q43. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

General rules, techniques and advice for all drivers and riders

Q45. Do you have any further comments about the changes to the general rules, techniques and advice for all drivers and riders?

Rule 151- We support new rule which would advise drivers to allow pedestrians and cyclists to cross in front of them in slow moving traffic, clarifying that cyclists can filter past other traffic.

Rule 213- We support a revised rule 213, which explains the circumstances in which and why cyclists may sometimes ride in the centre of the lane, rather than towards the side of the road, and that drivers should allow them to do so for their (the cyclists') own safety.

Rule 186- We support drivers giving priority to cyclists at roundabouts. Namely that drivers would be advised to give priority to cyclists on a roundabout, to give them plenty of room, not attempt to overtake within their lane, and to allow cyclists to move across their path as they travel around the roundabout.

Using the road

Q46. Do you agree that cyclists may pass slower moving traffic on their right or left as detailed in Rule 163?

Yes

Using the road

Q48. Do you agree with the proposed speed limits detailed at Rule 163 for overtaking:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
motorcyclists?	X		
cyclists?	X		
horse riders?	X		
horse drawn vehicles?	X		

If no, why not?

Horses should be given the maximum distance possible in a safe manner

Q49. Do you agree with the proposed passing distances detailed at Rule 163 for overtaking:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
motorcyclists?	X		
cyclists?	X		
horse riders?	X		
horse drawn vehicles?	X		

If no, why not?

Horses should be given the maximum distance possible in a safe manner

Q50. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Using the road

Q52. Do you agree with the proposed changes to Rule 186 that:

	Yes	No	Don't know?
you do not overtake cyclists within their lane?	X		
you allow cyclists to move across your path?	X		
cyclists may stay in the left lane when continuing across or around the roundabout?	X		
horse riders may stay in the left lane when continuing across or around the roundabout?	X		
horse drawn vehicles may stay in the left lane when continuing across or around the roundabout?	X		

If no, why not?

Where cyclists (and other road users as well) stay in the left lane when turning right, they should be advised that they should clearly indicate that they are turning right using clear hand signals. This is for their safety and awareness of other road users.

Q53. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Using the road

Q55. Do you agree with the proposed change to Rule 195 to give way to pedestrians and cyclists waiting to cross at a parallel crossing?

Yes

Using the road Rule 195 wording: zebra and parallel crossings

Q57. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Using the road

Q59. Do you have any further comments about the changes to the rules on using the road?

Rule 178- We support the proposals to provide advice for drivers to allow cyclists enough time and space to move off when the green signal shows would also be extended to include any moving or waiting alongside them.

Additionally we support that drivers of large vehicles would also be specifically advised to stop sufficiently far behind the first white line to see the whole area where cyclists may be waiting, allowing for any blind spots in front of their vehicle.

Road users requiring extra care

Q60. Do you agree with the proposed changes to Rule 213?

Yes

Rule 213 road users requiring extra care: cycling on narrow roads

Q62. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Waiting and parking

Q65. Do you agree with the proposed change to Rule 239?

Yes

Rule 239 waiting and parking: Dutch reach

Q67. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

Waiting and parking

Q69. Do you have any further comments about the other change proposed to Rule 239 on waiting and parking?

We support the new rule which would advise people to open car doors using the hand on the opposite side to the door they are opening, so you would use your left hand to open the driver's door on your righthand side. This technique, known as the Dutch Reach, makes you turn your head to look over your shoulder before opening the door, and should reduce the number of cyclists injured when someone opens a car door without looking. This method should be well communicated to car drivers to ensure that they are aware of this and that the rule is effectively used to the benefit of cyclists.

Annexes

Q70. Do you have any comments about the changes proposed to:

annex 1? No

annex 6? No

Other comments on The Highway Code

Q71. Do you have any further comments regarding the proposed amendments to The Highway Code which focus on safety improvements for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders?

Where there is no provision for safe cycling on a busy stretch of road or contraflow traffic, cyclists should be able to be able to use the pavement without breaking the law. The highway code should be updated to allow for cyclists to use pavements where their safety would otherwise be at risk.

Final comments

Q72. Any other comments?

Thankyou for taking the time to review the Highway code to improve road safety for cyclists and other road users. With the governments recent push for increases in cycling provision and the governments 2050 net zero commitment, we need to do everything we can to ensure that cyclists feel safe on the roads. Encouraging safe cycling will not only benefit reduction in carbon emissions, it is beneficial for peoples health and wellbeing and could easily help reduce pressures on government spending such as demands on the NHS.