



Chris Heaton-Harris MP
Minister of State
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

17 April 2020

Dear Minister

Temporary infrastructure for cycling and walking

Firstly, thank you very much for your supportive words in relation to the Wheels For Heroes crowdfunding campaign during the Transport Select Committee on 7th April 2020. You will be pleased to know that we are on track to manufacture 1,000 Brompton bikes for use by NHS staff, thanks to the generous donations from over 1,600 supporters.

However, providing bikes for key workers is just one small part of enabling cycling during this crisis. With the large increase in people, including children, cycling and walking, it's clear that many street layouts across the UK are not currently fit for purpose during the pandemic.

As you will be aware, towns and cities around the world are enabling cycling and walking during COVID-19, within social distancing guidelines, by implementing temporary infrastructure. This is already being rolled out successfully in New Zealand and by a number of cities in the USA, Canada, Germany and elsewhere. We have vast amounts of currently underused road space which can be temporarily reallocated at low cost. This is becoming increasingly essential as key workers choose cycling or walking to get to work, avoiding potential transmission via public transport. You will have also noticed a surge in people cycling and walking for exercise in line with the government's public health recommendations; such measures improve conditions for these groups too.

We welcome your Department's statement made yesterday, clarifying that local authorities have powers to take initiatives of this kind using Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders and similar procedures. Our organisations would, however, urge you to go further and provide a clear positive ministerial statement encouraging local highway authorities to consider implementing temporary initiatives of this kind. That would give local authorities the confidence to quickly implement measures, enabling safe cycling and walking within the Government's social distancing guidelines.

In discussion with NHS colleagues, we know that these measures would have a positive impact in encouraging more health workers to cycle to work and have the added benefit of providing safe segregation or protection from motor traffic.

Finally, post the current lockdown restrictions, a large proportion of the UK population will again be moving around towns and cities, but hesitant to use public transport where there is a greater risk of transmission. In order to mitigate against a second wave influx of Coronavirus cases, we feel it prudent to plan ahead and implement these temporary measures now for key workers but also to allow the wider population to travel by bicycle or by foot in the short term as lockdown restrictions lift.

We ask for your prompt and public encouragement of local authorities to support these initiatives. That way, we can quickly enable active travel by our NHS heroes and the key workers who are helping the country through this crisis.

Yours sincerely

Will Butler-Adams
CEO, Brompton Bicycle

Co-signed

Paul Tuohy
Chief Executive, Cycling UK

Dr Ian Basnett
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