

Chris Heaton-Harris
Minister for Cycling
Department for Transport
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Westcliffe Hall
2 Harlow Terrace
Harrogate
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1st June 2020

Dear Mr Heaton-Harris,

Emergency active travel funding

We're Harrogate District's cycle campaign group, and we seek to work constructively with our local authorities.

9th May 2020 announcement

We were very encouraged by the Secretary of State's announcement of Statutory Guidance on active travel on 9th May 2020. We hoped that our Highways Authority, North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC), would follow the Guidance and make significant changes to our roads.

We made a number of suggestions (which can be found here <https://harrogatecycleaction.org.uk/post-lockdown-active-travel-improvements-harrogate-district/>). Unfortunately, NYCC has taken very little action so far – only a small gesture in widening pavements on three streets in the town centre, and no cycling improvements yet. (They are considering one temporary protected bike lane – Beech Grove - and they expect to have more details in a few weeks' time).

Our Chairman tried to set up a video call with the Cabinet Member for Highways, but after several emails he hasn't received a reply. We have learnt indirectly (via the Local Democracy Reporter) that NYCC prefers permanent solutions to pop-up cycle routes.

Pop-up vs permanent solutions

There has been a very significant increase in the number of people riding bikes in the District recently, and we are keen to see pop-up cycle routes so they can keep riding as traffic increases. This would also be an opportunity to trial routes and see if they are suitable for permanent solutions.

Permanent solutions are of course welcome, but progress has ground to a halt over the last few years. A cycleway on Otley Road was funded by NPIF and due to be built in July 2018. At the time of writing the scheme has been split into three phases but no construction work has begun even on phase one.

We're optimistic about plans for Harrogate funded by Transforming Cities, but based on our experience we are concerned that delivery could take 5 years, 10 years, or longer.

Please help

Would it be possible for the DfT to liaise with NYCC over pop-up cycle facilities? It may be that help and expertise is needed to develop and implement schemes quickly. Perhaps Andrew Jones MP, who is a former Transport Minister, could assist?

Yours sincerely,

Harrogate District Cycle Action

cc Andrew Jones MP