

Our ref: 100,284

David Bray
Project Director
A14 Cambridge to
Huntingdon improvement scheme
Highways England
Woodlands, Manton Lane
Bedford
MK41 7LW

17 September 2019

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for contacting us on 27 August 2019 to request information relating to the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon improvement scheme. As your request relates to a new road scheme, we have answered it under the terms of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

You asked ... *'What changes have you made to your procedures on notifications of closures for cycle access, signage for cyclist detours and coordination with works on other crossing points of the A14 for cyclists as a result of complaints regarding the recent closures to cyclists?'*

We've made a commitment to informing road users and residents of work that will impact them up to two weeks in advance where possible. Where this is not possible, we inform people as soon as we have confirmation of details including dates, timings and the work being carried out. We do this via a wide range of communications channels including social media, the media, email updates, letter drops and face to face.

On this occasion it wasn't possible to give the full two weeks of advance notice. This is because we got confirmation of all the details of the guided busway closure less than two weeks before work was due to start. This sometimes happens as the complex work programmes on our scheme, which cover a wide geographical area, need to remain flexible. We always avoid sharing approximate information as this has the potential to confuse people.

It might be useful for you to know what actions we've taken since the cycle path was closed.

Notifications of closures for cycle access

We initially notified people via social media, the media, and our weekly email. We also wrote to Daniel Zeichner MP, parishes and affected residents. We and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) posted advance closure notification signs on the busway. We recognised we only gave late notice and apologised for the inconvenience.

We then realised that the reopening in July wasn't going to happen. We notified people in the same way as above as soon as we knew we had to keep the path shut. I'm afraid we couldn't have known this any earlier. The team were doing everything they could to work through the challenging ground conditions and reopen on time. We gave a new reopening date for the cycle path and busway.

Unfortunately, due to the amount of work we have to do within a short space of time to complete the A14 upgrade, we've also had to make some changes to a shared use path which sits along the busway cycle path diversion at junction 32 (Histon). We therefore had to amend the diversion slightly during the closure period so that people now had to use one of the paths across the junction only instead of a choice of two.

We gave as much notification as possible as soon as we became aware that the cycle path would reopen on time, but the busway wouldn't.

Each time, we worked closely with CCC, Stagecoach and Whippet to ensure customers would get accurate information. The information was shared on Stagecoach and CCC's social media and on Stagecoach's website.

As mentioned above, we normally give people, including cyclists, drivers and residents, two weeks' notice of anything that will impact them. We'll continue to do so, where possible, to help people plan ahead.

Signage for cyclist detours

The decision on where the diversion route would run and how it was managed rests with CCC. We work closely with them to publicise it and to help manage it where we can.

Following comments from the public we realised clearer signage was needed and that the route needed to be checked regularly to ensure signs weren't moved. We worked closely with CCC to add extra signs and make them easier to understand. Our team also patrolled the route regularly to ensure the signage was in place and in the right position to avoid any obstructions.

Following further comments, we also realised that cyclists travelling with trailers might need more space, so we repositioned our signs accordingly.

Coordination with works on other crossing points of the A14 for cyclists

As mentioned above, due to the amount of work we have to do within a short space of time we also had to make some changes to a shared use path which sits along the original diversion at junction 32 (Histon). This meant that we had to amend the diversion slightly during the closure period. Now people had to use one of the paths across the junction instead of a choice of two.

This was not a lack of coordination on our part but rather the need to run several activities on at the same time. Please be assured that we worked collaboratively with CCC to arrive at the best possible solution. However, we recognise that this work had an impact on the increased number of cyclists using the diversion during the closure of the guided busway.

Other considerations for this were that we needed to work during the day to avoid loud noise at night for residents nearby. We needed to do the work over the summer school holidays as much as possible to avoid impacting school runs. We also needed to carry this out now in order to progress with the widening of the A14 on the Cambridge northern bypass as quickly as possible. This is so the road can be opened on time and start delivering benefits to its users and local communities around it.

If you are unhappy with the way we have handled your request you may ask for an internal review within two months of the date of this response for Freedom of Information requests and within 40 days for Environmental Information Regulations requests.

Our internal review process is available at:

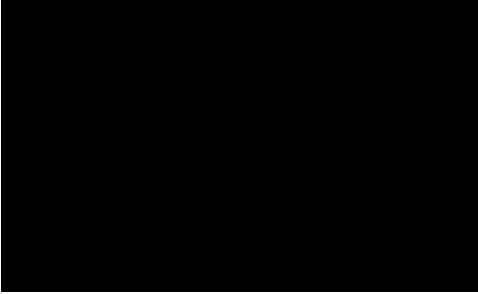
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/highways-england/about/complaints-procedure>. If you require a print copy, please phone the Information Line on 0300 123 5000; or e-mail info@highwaysengland.co.uk. You should contact me if you wish to complain.

If you are not content with the outcome of the internal review, you have the right to apply directly to the Information Commissioner for a decision. The Information Commissioner can be contacted at:

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

If you have any queries about this letter, please contact me. Please remember to quote reference number 100,284 in any future communications.

Yours sincerely



David Bray
Project Director