

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

## Your details

Q1. Your (used for contact details only):

**name?** Alan Morris (Chair)

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Q2. Are you responding:

on behalf of an organisation?

## Organisation details

Q3. What is the name of your organisation?

Bristol Walking Alliance

## 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?**

Rule H1: It is important that ALL road users are aware of The Highway Code, are considerate to other road users and understand their responsibility for the safety of others.

Suggestion: unless the way that the Highway Code is disseminated is radically changed, it is currently unreasonable to expect pedestrians to be aware of the content of the Highway Code. The current reality is that people 'learn' the Highway Code, or at least the elements that are necessary to pass the driving test, when they are preparing for a driving test. The whole topic of their learning is driving and so apparently scant regard is given to the elements that relate to walking, cycling and wheeling (using other wheeled propulsion designed to use pedestrian infrastructure, such as a wheelchair). It does not help that almost all of the elements relating to walking, cycling and wheeling are presented as suggestions ('you should', 'consider', etc) whereas most of the items relating to driving are obligations, 'you MUST' (bold capitalisation in red is used for must throughout, hence they become the parts of the code that people preparing for their test tend to focus on) and are linked to laws. This needs to be fully reconsidered, and this is not helped by no formal way after a driving test to refresh knowledge of the Highway Code, including when changes are made.

Suggestions to address this could include putting it on the national curriculum for primary (with a pedestrian emphasis) and secondary schools.

**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?

No

**Disagrees with stronger priorities for pedestrians wording**

## Q12. Why not?

### Suggestions:

- H2 could be strengthened by adding 'approaching' to 'crossing or waiting to cross' otherwise it encourages drivers to cut in on pedestrians or to speed up to get there before the pedestrian or cyclist does, both of which put pedestrians and cyclists at risk.
- Specific reference should be given to emerging configurations at side road junctions as illustrated in LTN 1/20 Figure 10.13. At a junction you should give way to pedestrians approaching, crossing or waiting to cross a road into which or from which you are turning. This guidance to give way may be reinforced by the use of marked priority for crossing pedestrians and cyclists over turning vehicles or by the use of design priority. Design priority, in the form of continuous footways means that the turning vehicle has to give way to crossing pedestrians, before crossing the footway when it is clear.
- "This includes people using wheelchairs and mobility scooters. Pedestrians may use any part of the road and use cycle tracks..." pedestrian freedom to use any part of the road or cycle track should also be tempered with the responsibility to share and to try not to obstruct other users.
- It is unclear how drivers exiting from a side road are expected to give way to crossing and waiting pedestrians. This would suggest that they should stop short of the give way markings, which would be a new practice for them. It could be reinforced by setting back the give way markings before the dropped kerbs, but that would need to also be accompanied by changes in regulations that made it clear to drivers (and highway engineers/planners) that these markings are intended to mean 'give way to crossing pedestrians' as well as to vehicles on the main road.
- This section highlights the lack of legislation to protect the most vulnerable street users, the only MUST (and therefore linked law) protecting pedestrians is the obligation for drivers to stop for pedestrians on a zebra crossing. This is not good enough. The protection of the law as it stands is inversely proportional to the vulnerability of the street user.
- Why highlight horse riders giving way at a zebra crossing, which is a very minor concern? Cyclists should be highlighted here as they often fail to give way and are a surprise to drivers when they do

The 'Rules for pedestrians' chapter of The Highway Code will be updated to:

- introduce a responsibility for drivers and riders to give way to pedestrians waiting to cross a side road or junction, or waiting to cross at a zebra crossing

Suggestion: Rules for pedestrians should be extended to 'give way to pedestrians approaching a side road, junction or zebra crossing'.

## 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?

Yes

## 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?

No

## Disagrees with rules for pedestrians wording

Q19. Why not?

Suggestion: rules for pedestrians should be extended to 'give way to pedestrians approaching a side road, junction or zebra crossing', not just when they are waiting to cross. No logical reason why when crossing the road there is only guidance for road users to give way, except at zebra crossings where there is an obligation. The hierarchy of road use demands that the obligation to give way to crossing pedestrians is extended to all circumstances.

## Rules for pedestrians

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

Support the idea of a hierarchy of road users, which follows 'Code de la Rue' (Street use code) introduced in Belgium, France, Luxembourg and Switzerland over the last few years, moving from a manual that facilitates the movement of motorised traffic, to one that facilitates mobility and introduces the idea of prudence towards those that are more vulnerable on our streets.

Support idea of ensuring that cyclists and horse riders have priority at junctions – however, pedestrians need to also be considered in this point and should be referenced. When travelling straight ahead at a priority junction pedestrians should also have priority. When walking on a narrow footway or using a shared path, overtaking cyclists and motorised vehicles should adopt appropriate passing distances and speed. Suggestion: This should be added to the changes to Rule 63.

Introduction

the aim of The Highway Code is to promote safety on the road, whilst also supporting a healthy, sustainable and efficient transport system

Suggestion: the use of the word 'transport' in the introduction will not include people on foot in most people's mind. Either the document needs to define this as an all-embracing term that includes the walking network as 'a system or means of conveying people or goods from place to place', or another more inclusive term needs to be used. The Danish equivalent to the Transport Act is Færdselsloven. Importantly the word "færdse" means the act of getting around, not the people or vehicles doing it. The Highway Code should promote the safety of the street to support people getting around, by whatever means they choose and should be just as supportive of people moving on foot as it is of people in public and private motor vehicles, particularly important when considering a healthy, sustainable and efficient transport system.

## 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?

No

## Disagrees with Rule 63 for cyclists wording: shared spaces

Q28. Why not?

Suggestion: add guidance that when passing a pedestrian, a cyclist should not pass too close, but should pass at a distance that is safe and perceived by the pedestrian to be safe; and to slow down if space constraints force the cyclist to pass by closely. This would be similar to Rule 212 in respect of motorists passing other road users.

## Rules for cyclists

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

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

Q33. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

## Rules for cyclists

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

Yes

## Rule 76 for cyclists wording: going straight ahead

Q37. Is the proposed wording easy to understand?

Yes

## Rules for cyclists

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

no

## Rules for drivers and motorcyclists

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

no

## 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?

no

## 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		

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		

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		

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?

No



## Disagrees with Rule 195 using the road wording: zebra and parallel crossings

Q58. Why not?

Suggestion: as for H2, strengthen Rule 195 by adding 'approaching from the side of the crossing' to 'waiting to cross'. This would give parity with the general traffic on the main road that is not expected to give way as it passes every side road.

## Using the road

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

no

## 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

## Road users requiring extra care

Q64. Do you have any further comments about other changes proposed in the chapter on road users requiring extra care?

no

## 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?

no

## 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?

Organisations such as the Bristol Walking Alliance could be used to promote any future changes to the Highway Code, particularly with regards to walking.

## Final comments

Q72. Any other comments?

no