



**OXFORDSHIRE  
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Cllr Ian Hudspeth  
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My ref: IH/CJR

**Please ask for Cllr Ian Hudspeth**

12 January 2010

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Dear James

**Cycling in Queen Street, Oxford**

Thank you for your letter dated 14 December about cycling in Queen Street. I'm particularly pleased to receive your positive comments about the improvements we carried out last year.

We have considered carefully your request for relaxing the restriction on cyclists in Queen Street. However, my view at this present time is that we need to give the scheme more time to bed in before we make any decisions about further changes to how the street operates. The changes we introduced last year were not insignificant and it is important to give users of the street an opportunity to get used to the altered conditions. In particular we feel that in time pedestrians may make even fuller use of the central carriageway than they have done so far. If they do, it might not be appropriate in such a pedestrian dominated environment for us to encourage more daytime use of the street by cyclists, however slowly or considerately they travel through.

I accept your point about cyclists and pedestrians being able to share a street quite safely, although this is of course more in terms of recorded injury accidents. The absence of recorded accidents may mean that pedestrians are safe in real terms, but in practice they may still be made to feel uncomfortable. Whilst we clearly want to encourage more cycling in the city centre, we do not want to see that at the undue expense of the pedestrian experience in the city centre.

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

I would add it is not as clear as you suggest that the cycling ban was mainly attributable to the nature of the bus traffic in Queen Street before last July. It is equally likely that cycles were originally excluded between 10am and 6pm as a result of the busy pedestrian nature of the street. This is borne out by the fact that bus frequencies did not reduce after 10am. The thing that changes after 10am is that the street becomes much busier with pedestrians.

I am very happy to commit to a meeting in the summer where we can discuss this subject again in the light of more experience of how the street is working. And whilst I certainly wouldn't want to promise anything, it is possible that following this meeting we might consider a trial of alterations to the arrangements for cyclists in Queen Street.

I understand that you are contacting Steve Howell separately to discuss how the Bike Polite scheme (or something similar) might be taken forward in Oxford/shire. There is already an advisory 5mph speed limit in Queen Street for all vehicles signposted from the New Road end. In the first instance, I'll ask officers to consider your suggestion of a 5mph limit for semi pedestrianised streets although I can't imagine implementing that would be straightforward even if it were to be desirable!

Thanks again for writing to us about this.

Yours sincerely



Cllr Ian Hudspeth  
Cabinet Member for Growth & Infrastructure

Cc CJR/MK/AW