

THE POLICE AND CRIME PLAN

LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND 2013 - 2017

Response by Leicester Cycling Campaign Group (LCCG)

As a starting point for this response, LCCG searched all 50 pages of the Police and Crime Plan for any mention of cycling or cyclists. None was found. The only reference to road safety in the entire document is in Section 4.3 'WORKING WITH PARTNERS TO TACKLE CRIME AND RE-OFFENDING' which contains the following statement:

The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership also has a key role to play in reducing accidents, injuries and deaths on our roads and I will work with them to support them [sic] "provide a safer environment on the roads of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland."

Sir Clive, this is unacceptable. In 2011 some 3,350¹ people were killed or injured on the roads for which you as Police Commissioner for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland have responsibility. Of those casualties, 320² (almost one in ten) were cyclists. Clearly other agencies have a role to play, but it is the police who patrol our roads, and it is you who sets the strategy for them. To say merely that 'you will work with' the Road Safety Partnership suggests that you do not see yourself as having personal responsibility for reducing road casualties. Yet it is the police who, by their actions or inactions, have the most impact on road users' behaviour.

You also say, in reference to hate crime, that

I have pledged (in my manifesto) to protect the most vulnerable in society and to support victims of crime and ASB.

The LCCG would suggest to you that cyclists have a legitimate claim to be regarded as 'the most vulnerable in society' when they are using the roads for which you have responsibility. Sharing the carriageway with vehicles up to 42 tons in weight and that are travelling far more quickly, is an unequal contest. It is a situation where we can reasonably request that you, and your officers, should offer us as much support and protection as possible within the constraints of the law.

In general terms, this would involve your officers enforcing road traffic legislation more rigorously because much of our traffic law exists to protect vulnerable road users. By, for example, clamping down on the use of mobile phones whilst driving, and by enforcing speed limits. At present, there seems little or no risk of prosecution for any traffic offence other than those policed by cameras.

There are also cycling-specific actions that the LCCG would wish to see implemented. These include:

- Policing advanced stop zones (ASZs) for cyclists. At present, drivers are able to encroach on ASZs seemingly without fear of reproach. This

reinforces their perception that cyclists' needs should always take second place, which in turn helps to make the roads more dangerous for cyclists.

- Policing on-carriageway cycle lanes. Here too, motorists regard their observation of these lanes as being optional, so that their need to park must trump a cyclist's right to use them.
- Policing driver behaviour around cyclists. It is not acceptable, for instance, to overtake with inches to spare (placing the cyclist at significant risk), safe in the knowledge that as long as there is no collision, there is no risk of prosecution.

For the avoidance of doubt, we believe that education, as well as enforcement, has a part to play in making the roads safer for cyclists. Perhaps the Road Safety Partnership could consider a campaign around that part of the Highway Code that relates to vulnerable road users: particularly Rule 163:



The LCCG would be happy to work with you on any aspect of your responsibilities that relate to cyclists, and would hope that you will amend your draft plan to make plain your commitment to making the roads safe for cyclists and for all users.

Leicester Cycling Campaign Group

8 March 2010

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^{1, 2} All data taken from STATS19 data at

<http://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/road-accidents-safety-data>