

to: "MURRAY, Ian" <ian.murray.mp@parliament.uk>  
cc: spokes <spokes@spokes.org.uk>  
bcc: [2 known victim email addresses]  
date: 17 Jul 2019, 00:56  
subject: URGENT - Govt tactiles review

Hi Ian

I'm emailing from Spokes on a matter concerning UK government provisions.

Some twenty years ago the Dept of Transport produced [guidance on the tactile pavements](#) used to alert people with sight problems to dangers such as steps, road crossings, cycle route crossings, etc.

Unfortunately, as we understand it, there was no consultation with cyclist interests and minimal consultation even with pedestrian groups. As a result, the guidance requires grooved tactiles oriented in the 'tramline' orientation on cycle routes (near crossing points) and in the crossways orientation on pedestrian routes. The result being that cyclists sometimes skid and crash, whilst wheelchairs and pushchairs go over a series of mini-bumps. Full consultation might well have caused the guidance to reverse the orientation for both classes of user. Those on 4 wheels would then have a smooth crossing of the tactiles, whilst those on 2 wheels would have little risk of skidding.

Spokes knows of three individuals in recent years who have had to attend hospital as a result of such crashes (all on Meadows cycle routes), the injuries including, respectively for each victim...

1. losing consciousness, elbow fracture, severe bruising
2. two broken arms
3. shoulder injury requiring physio over an extended period.

**I will bcc victims 1 and 3 and hereby urge them to contact you to confirm what happened and their injuries.** Unfortunately we don't have the email address for victim 2, but are trying to obtain it.

Some time ago the UK govt announced they would be reviewing this 20-year-old guidance, though it did not appear that cycling issues were part of the reason for the review. See para 8.16 at [www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-transport-strategy/the-inclusive-transport-strategy-achieving-equal-access-for-disabled-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-transport-strategy/the-inclusive-transport-strategy-achieving-equal-access-for-disabled-people).

Through twitter we have just discovered, quite by accident, that a survey for the review is underway by TRL, for which the closing date is 24 July, here...  
<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/BGRE5/>

Spokes is deeply shocked that there is no mention of cycling aspects - just like when the original guidance was drawn up 20 years ago. And yet we cannot believe the govt has not heard of cycling crashes and injuries - the 3 cases above are from Edinburgh alone, and if we have heard of 3 then doubtless there are others in Edinburgh, let alone in the rest of the UK!

Since tactiles are laid in these unfortunate orientations all over the UK, and people are used to them, it is probably unlikely that the basic principle will be altered. **However there are almost certainly steps which could significantly reduce the cyclist crash dangers, and these should be evaluated and added to the guidance.** We understand that Edinburgh Council's Active Travel Team is

working on this and experimenting with various options [Contact officer is Phil Noble], but all having to be within the unfortunate constraints of the existing guidance.

We would be grateful if you would raise this matter urgently with the relevant channels, given that the survey ends in 7 days time - though doubtless decisions will be some time after that.

Dave dF  
for Spokes

NB - I have tweeted this to try and spread the knowledge of the survey quickly...  
<https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian/status/1151229784028061701>