



## PETITION

### Reverse the motorcycles in bus lanes consultation outcome

We call upon the Government to reverse its decision on the motorcycles in bus lanes consultation published 21 November 2024.

The outcome chosen was Option 1: Do nothing.

The claimed reasons for rejecting Option 2 (Allow motorcycles to access bus lanes by default) were that:

- The safety benefits of allowing motorcycles into bus lanes are not clear.
- The response rate from local authorities and stakeholder organisations was low and did not provide a robust evidence base on which to amend the current policy.
- Research on the potential safety impacts for cyclists, and the impact on bus services, would be needed to form the evidence base for any change in policy.
- The cost to local authorities in new traffic signs and Traffic Regulation Orders of mandating such a change for existing bus lanes would be considerable.
- At present, the Government has no policy to encourage greater use of motorcycles.
- The existing position - that local authorities can allow motorcycles into bus lanes at their discretion - aligns with wider government policy on bus service improvements, encouraging walking and cycling and devolving powers to local authorities.
- DfT is strongly convinced that local authorities are best placed to understand the needs of their local road network rather than central government.
- In the absence of robust data from the consultation, there is little justification for moving away from a position of local authority choice to one in which allowing motorcycles to use bus lanes is the default.

Over 98% of individual and 93% of stakeholder responses agreed 'If it is safe to do so, motorcycles should be allowed to access bus lanes by default'

The answer to the question "is it safe to do so?" was not invited.

Despite evidence provided that over 55 local authorities do allow access, only 10 local authorities responded with answers to questions on collisions. Out of those 10 local authorities, 80% reported no change or decreased collisions for all transport modes where motorcycles have access to bus lanes. Despite 20% reporting an increase in collisions, information was not provided to ascertain whether the traffic volumes had changed. Increases



in collisions could plausibly result from increased volumes of traffic outweighing decreases in collision rates. Information on the magnitude of any changes was not requested, nor provided.

The consultation questions were framed to imply that a default policy is a mandate that would remove local authority powers to choose whether to allow motorcycles to use bus lanes on their networks. A default policy position does not mandate motorcycle access. Thus, the framing of questions implying an erosion of local authority powers unduly influenced responses by creating a 'straw man' argument.

Evidence of the safety benefits was not fully reviewed and considered. The fact that over 55 local authorities have already made motorcycle access permanent in approximately half of the bus lanes in the UK has been ignored.

The cost to local authorities for granting access can be readily mitigated, and allowing access in new bus lanes is cost free. The cost of motorcycle casualties resulting from riders being forced into closer proximity with the same vehicles from which cyclists are being separated was not considered.

The policy was proposed and consulted based on the premise of increasing motorcycle safety in congested urban environments. We would hope this does align with Government policy. The outcome statement including the confirmation that the Government has no plans to encourage greater use of motorcycles thus betrays a biased consideration of the proposals based on a pre-determined policy position of the new Government which conflicts with that of the previous Government that launched the consultation.

The default access policy does not conflict with policy for bus service improvements, encouraging walking and cycling or devolving powers to local authorities.

The outcome decision appears politically motivated as opposed to being based on due consideration of the consultation responses and evidence made available.

For these reasons the outcome should be reversed.