



HM Government



Changes to The Highway Code – Jan 2022

Communications Toolkit

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Overview

The Highway Code is essential reading for all road users. It applies to England, Scotland and Wales. It is important that all road users are aware of The Highway Code and are considerate towards each other. Ultimately, knowing and applying The Highway Code will help keep our roads safe for everyone.

We are seeing record numbers of people taking up cycling and The Highway Code needs to keep pace with how people are using the roads. These changes to The Highway Code seek to improve safety for people walking, cycling and horse riding and make active travel an attractive alternative to using the car. They will help to ensure that interactions between all road users are safe and respectful.

The main advisory* changes from 29th January 2022 include:

- **A new hierarchy of road users has been introduced to ensure those who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others.**
- **Existing rules on pedestrian priority have been updated to advise that drivers and riders should give way to pedestrians crossing or waiting to cross the road.**

- **Guidance has been provided on cyclist priority at junctions to advise drivers to give priority to cyclists when they are travelling straight ahead.**
- **Guidance has been established on safe passing distances and speeds when overtaking cyclists and horse riders.**

The changes can be viewed in full [here](#) or by visiting: www.gov.uk/dft/highway-code-changes

These changes aim to reinforce what good road users already do. They do not just offer guidance on how we want users to behave. They signpost the kind of community we want to live in; towns, cities and villages that are friendly and safe for people to ride, walk and wheel.

*The changes introduce new advisory measures that are not legal requirements, but could be drawn upon in court proceedings.

The consultation on the proposed alterations to The Highway Code to improve safety for cyclists, pedestrians and horse riders (July to Oct 2020), generated a huge response with nearly 21,000 replies received.

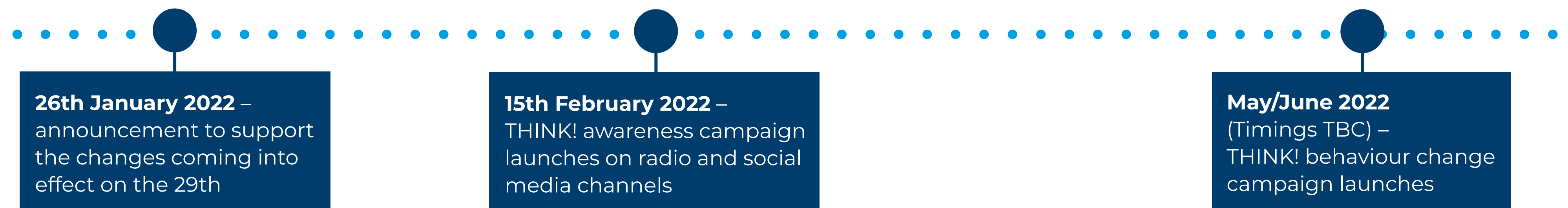
The majority of respondents were in favour of all the different rule changes proposed being introduced. Of those, over 60% identified as a motorist.





Campaign phasing, Timings and How Stakeholders Can Support

Communications to share the changes to The Highway Code campaign will be delivered in phases:



This communications toolkit has been created to support stakeholders raising awareness of the changes to The Highway Code from 26th January, predominantly across social media and digital channels. This will be supported by a press release from The Department for Transport (DfT).

From 26th January the Department for Transport will be posting ongoing social media content to promote the changes.

Ahead of the 15th February 2022 and the THINK! awareness campaign launch, this communications toolkit will be updated to include the campaign creative assets, which stakeholders and partners will be able to use to amplify the campaign.

All assets will be made available via the campaign extranet: **[The Highway Code Changes – 29 January 2022 | Department for Transport \(dft.gov.uk\)](#)**





Campaign Materials - Social Post Copy

A full suite of campaign creative assets will be ready to use from 15th February 2022, however we have provided some messaging which can be used to communicate with your key audiences on social media and digital channels from 26th January 2022.

We recommend that all posts link to:
www.gov.uk/dft/highway-code-changes



Suggested social post copy

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The Highway Code has been changed to improve safety for people walking, cycling and horse riding. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**
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The Highway Code has been changed to introduce a hierarchy of road users. Irrespective of how you travel, those who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others. The Highway Code has changed. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**
- 

The Highway Code has changed. You now should give people crossing, or waiting to cross, and cycling straight ahead priority when turning in and out of junctions. The Highway Code has changed. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**





Campaign Materials - Social Post Copy

Suggested social post continued



The Highway Code has changed. You now should leave at least 1.5 metres when overtaking cyclists at speeds of up to 30mph; and give them more space when overtaking at higher speeds. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**



The Highway Code has changed. When driving, you should now pass horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles at speeds under 10 mph and allow at least 2 metres of space. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**



The Highway Code has changed. You should now allow at least 2 metres of space and keep to a low speed when passing someone walking in the road. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**



The Highway Code has changed. Car users should now open their doors with the hand furthest from the door, to help them look over their shoulder to see people walking or cycling behind them. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**



The Highway Code has changed. People may cycle in the centre of the lane or two abreast for their own safety, whilst allowing others to overtake when it is safe for them to do so. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**



The Highway Code has changed. Let's improve how we all share our roads and understand our responsibility for the safety of others. Check the changes, let's keep each other safe. **#HighwayCode**





Campaign Materials - Key messages for your website and comms

You can add the below key messages to your website (e.g. on the home or news pages), and / or use it as the basis for any comms to members / internal stakeholders.

2022 Updates to the Highway Code

As of 29th January 2022, The Highway Code has changed. These advisory changes have been implemented to improve safety for people walking, cycling and horse riding. Every road user still has a responsibility to keep themselves and each other safe, and the changes mean being ready to give priority, leave space and be considerate of others.

In summary, irrespective of your method of transport, a new hierarchy of road users has been introduced to ensure those who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others.

This means:

- Giving people crossing and waiting to cross and cyclists (or people cycling) going straight ahead priority when turning in and out of junctions
- Giving plenty of space when passing people cycling and horse riders
- And making sure we're acting with responsibility and respect to all road users

Specifically:

- You now should give people crossing and waiting to cross and cyclists going straight ahead priority when turning in and out of junctions.
- You now should leave at least 1.5 metres when overtaking people cycling at speeds of up to 30mph, and give them more space when overtaking at higher speeds.
- When driving, you should now pass horse riders and horse-drawn vehicles at speeds under 10 mph and allow at least 2 metres of space.
- You should now allow at least 2 metres of space and keep to a low speed when passing a pedestrian who is walking in the road.
- Car users should now open their doors with the hand furthest from the door, to help them look over their shoulder to see cyclists or pedestrians nearby.
- People may cycle in the centre of the lane or two abreast for their own safety, whilst allowing others to overtake when it is safe for them to do so.

The changes can be viewed in full [here](#) or by visiting: www.gov.uk/dft/highway-code-changes





Displaying Accessible Content

Language

Write in language that's as simple as possible. Research shows that everyone prefers simple language, because it allows them to understand information as quickly as possible.

Where you need to use technical terms, abbreviations, or acronyms, explain what they mean the first time you use them.

Images

Online images need alternative text (alt text). If you use an image to convey information that is essential to understanding the page content – for example, a diagram that explains something – include alt text that gives screen reader users the same information. If an image is purely decorative or is explained in the text on the page, use empty alt text – indicated by "" (a pair of double quotes with no space).

Make illustrations and photographs as large as possible without being grainy.

Avoid:

- Using photos that contain a lot of detail or in which the foreground and background are not well contrasted.
- Putting text over images.
- Fitting text around images if this means lines of text start in a different place.





Contact us

If you have any questions or feedback on communications please don't hesitate to get in touch with: DfTPUBLICITY@dft.gov.uk
For queries on The Highway Code changes themselves, please contact HighwayCodeReview2020@dft.gov.uk.

Evaluating activity

We would be grateful if you could let us know any quantitative or qualitative feedback on your activity so we can continue to implement key learnings.

Thank you – we're all in this together to make the roads safer for everyone.

