

## **RNIB Scotland**

### **Coronavirus and remaking streets**

Lockdowns as a result of coronavirus are starting to be eased across the world. With this easing, we are seeing temporary changes being made to street layouts, largely to encourage cycling so that people don't have to use public transport.

Streets layouts can cause difficulties at the best of times for visually impaired people. We want to ensure that any temporary changes to our streets that may appear across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales allow blind and partially sighted people and those with other disabilities to still safely get around and to cross the roads using pedestrian crossing facilities. One of our concerns is about the implications of pop-up cycle lanes which will be created either by coning off road sections or by using paint or removable markers.

We are calling for the introduction of a Coronavirus Courtesy Code to enable safe social distancing for all road users.

### **Coronavirus Courtesy Code**

We recommend that:

- 1. A Coronavirus Courtesy Code should be promoted to enable safe social distancing for all road users. We would be happy to work with others on its development to make sure all pedestrians and road users:**
  - **Keep safe and keep 2 metres apart**
  - **Be aware that not all disabilities, including sight loss, are visible**
  - **Work together to ensure everyone can use our roads and paths**
2. Preference must be given to allocating extra space for cyclists from the road, not from the pavement space.
3. Any signage indicating any new pop-up cycle lanes should be placed on the road/cycle lane, not on the pavement.
4. Shared space between cyclists and pedestrians must be avoided. Blind and partially sighted pedestrians find it extremely difficult to detect cycles, whilst cyclists may not realise that a pedestrian has sight loss. Mobility aids such as white canes can get caught up bicycle wheels, which is a further hazard to both.
5. While retaining dropped kerbs at crossings for wheelchair users, kerbs should be kept allowing visually impaired people to safely find the pavement edge.
6. Existing controlled crossings should be maintained.
7. Warning markings and signs must also be provided to instruct cyclists to stop when pedestrians are near or on the formal crossing.
8. Many existing bus stops are inaccessible to people with sight loss if these must be reached across cycle lanes - new bus stop arrangements introduced under the scheme must be accessible to the visually impaired.

Contact [Campaign.Mailbox@rnib.org.uk](mailto:Campaign.Mailbox@rnib.org.uk) if you have been affected by these issues.