

# CHESTERFIELD AND DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY

[www.chesterfieldcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.chesterfieldcivicsociety.org.uk)

Chairman: Philip Riden  
9 Owen Falls Avenue, Chesterfield S41 0FR  
email: [chairman@chesterfieldcivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:chairman@chesterfieldcivicsociety.org.uk)  
Telephone 01246 554026

Executive Director Place  
Derbyshire County Council  
County Hall  
Matlock  
DE4 3AG

**Under signed-for cover**

10 December 2021

Dear Sir,

## **Complaint concerning Crow Lane, Chesterfield**

I refer to my letter of 3 December and to the county council's continuing failure to reopen to motor traffic the section of Crow Lane that was closed to motor traffic for a period ending on 1 December 2021. As far as I can judge, the continued closure of this section of Crow Lane to motor traffic is an unlawful act by the county council.

I must ask you to treat this letter as a **Complaint** to the county council in the sense in which that word is used by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman when refusing to investigate complaints made to him until the complainant has exhausted the complaints procedure of the local authority he or she is complaining against.

I would be obliged by an early response to this letter, so that I can proceed with my complaint to the Ombudsman. I am also writing to the Secretary of State for Transport drawing his attention to the unlawful action of the county council as a highway authority.

Yours faithfully,

(Philip Riden)

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Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman  
PO Box 4771  
Coventry  
CV4 0EH

**Under signed-for cover**

10 December 2021

Dear Sir,

**Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, as amended:  
Unlawful closure of Crow Lane, Chesterfield**

I wish to lay a complaint before you concerning the failure by Derbyshire county council to reopen a section of Crow Lane, Chesterfield, which the county council closed to motor traffic under the abovenoted Act for a period that expired on 1 December 2021. The roads remains closed at the time of writing.

This complaint is distinct from, but connected with, my earlier complaint concerning the conduct of Derbyshire county council in connection with the proposed Chesterfield East–West Cycling Route (your reference 21 010 542), in that the section of Crow Lane currently unlawfully closed to motor traffic forms part of the route in question.

Since my earlier complaint made no mention of the closure to motor traffic of a section of Crow Lane (which at that date was lawful) I would obliged if you would allocate a separate case number to this new complaint.

I enclose for your information a **Complaint** which I have today addressed to the chief officer of the county council responsible for the unlawful closure of Crow Lane. I will advise you if I receive a reply to that letter, which I assume will mark the end of the process of complaining to the local authority which you require to be completed before you will consider taking any action on a complaint.

Yours faithfully,

(P.J. Riden)

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Chris Heaton-Harris Esq. MP  
Minister of State  
Department for Transport  
33 Horseferry Road  
London SW1P 4DR

**Under signed-for cover**

10 December 2021

Dear Sir,

## **Proposed Chesterfield East–West Walking and Cycling Route Unlawful closure of Crow Lane, Chesterfield**

You may remember receiving and ignoring a letter from me dated 10 November concerning the above proposal.

Since then there has been a further development which in my view warrants your Department's intervention. At the beginning of the pandemic the county council closed to motor traffic part of a minor road named Crow Lane, which forms part of the proposed Walking and Cycling Route. This was a meaningless gesture, which the county council ridiculously claimed would facilitate better access by pedestrians and cyclists to Chesterfield Royal Hospital. In reality, virtually no staff, patients or visitors walk or cycle to the hospital.

The Order to close Crow Lane expired on 1 December. The county council have since taken no steps to reopen the road. This appears to be an unlawful action.

Reasonable people may differ as to whether Crow Lane should be closed permanently to motor traffic, or whether the proposed Walking and Cycling Route should go ahead.

Where I trust there is no difference of opinion is in the belief that local authorities must always act lawfully. I assume the Secretary of State has power to prevent local highways authorities acting unlawfully. If so, I would be grateful if you would use them in this case.

Yours faithfully,

(Philip Riden)