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## Big delays on A12 until Highways Agency climb down over cycle safety

From Monday 14th July the A12 in the Witham area is likely to see long delays as Peter Fox, Witham safety campaigner, exercises his right to cycle along it in the rush hour. This is because the Highways Agency won't address the issues of incompetent engineering and bogus safety assessments. It emerged at the recent public enquiry into the Hatfield-Peverel to Witham link road that cyclists would be expected to cycle just 18" from the busy A12 without any barrier and a monster roundabout which is obviously extremely dangerous for cyclists "posed no threat to two-wheeled vehicles"!

It is over seven weeks since writing to the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency (the government agency which looks after trunk roads) asking for action to deal with these issues of incompetence and bogus safety audits. Still no response (apart from a last minute irrelevant brush-off which only highlighted their contempt for the public). It appears the only way to deal with an arrogant organisation like this is to use direct action.

Therefore Peter Fox will be continuing this protest until the Chief of the Highways Agency comes to Witham and delivers an action plan for making sure that cycle safety is properly dealt with in future.

Peter Fox says : "Cycle campaigners are used to getting the brush-off from clueless highway engineers, but now we have a clear case of top management refusing to take action on very serious safety matters. I'm going to teach them a lesson they won't forget - Ignorance and arrogance is not an excuse for killing cyclists." He continues: "Basically the Highways Agency is dishonest. When challenged they give evasions and weak 'maybes' but nothing ever happens. That's why I'm insisting the (acting) Chief of the Highways Agency to come in person."

This is not simply a matter of a single road scheme but the rotten culture within the Highways Agency.

The engineering details and the very simple requirements of the required Action Plan are on [www.eminent.demon.co.uk/roadsafety.htm](http://www.eminent.demon.co.uk/roadsafety.htm)

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Note: The Chief Executive of the Highways Agency was Tim Matthews but he has just resigned to work in the public sector.