

Our ref: CEO 18026147

Your ref:

Kevin Hollinrake MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Mike Wilson

Chief Highway Engineer
2 The Square
Temple Quay
Bristol
BS1 6HA

<http://www.highwaysengland.co.uk/>

Direct Line: 0117 372 8478

2nd November 2015

Dear Mr. Hollinrake,

Thank you for your email addressed to Jim O'Sullivan of 16 September 2015. I believe an acknowledgement to your email has been provided which included an apology for the delay. This matter falls within my remit; your correspondence has therefore been passed to me for response.

We've been corresponding with Mr Silverman for some time and in May this year met with him to discuss a number of issues surrounding littering which included prosecution options.

Thank you for taking the time to search for our litter strategy on the Government website. I am sorry the dedicated litter webpage wasn't as easily accessible as it could be. The page is relatively new and there are a number of improvements we are undertaking in conjunction with the Government's digital team. For ease I attach a link to [the Litter Webpage](#).

I share your concern that litter on our roads is unsightly and an environmental hazard. I also think it is important to note that if people didn't drop litter in the first place it wouldn't need to be picked up.

Local Authorities (who also act as 'Litter Authorities') are responsible for litter enforcement on all roads, including Highways England's network. Enforcement Officers can issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) to individuals found to have dropped litter. However, due to the high speed nature of our roads and the type of evidence currently required, it is often not safe or practicable for Enforcement Officers to issue FPNs when litter is dropped from vehicles on our roads. However, with Parliament's adoption of the Anti-Social, Crime and Policing Act, 2014, registered keepers of vehicles can now be issued with a FPN if litter is dropped from their vehicle. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs are drafting regulations to support the implementation of this new Act.

Our own staff also have a role; for example, Highways England Traffic Officers patrolling on the network can, and do, carry out 'safety interventions', which includes stopping vehicles carrying un-sheeted loads that can result in debris being blown onto the road. If appropriate, these incidents are reported to the Police.

Our overall approach to litter on our network is guided by our litter strategy. This strategy was developed to outline strategic goals and initiatives to support the effective management of litter on motorways in England. It sets out a vision for keeping motorways free of litter as far as is reasonably possible. We are working with various bodies and anti-litter organisations, including Keep Britain Tidy, to tackle littering at source, aiming to make littering socially unacceptable. Our litter strategy is available to view at; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/highways->

[agency-litter-strategy](#) . Influencing a change in littering behaviour will take time, and with our partners we are researching various ways of achieving this. While this research is ongoing, we will continue to implement and develop national campaigns, like Bag it. Bin it! asking road users to take their litter home and dispose of it responsibly. We also support our partners and anti-litter organisations in their own anti-litter campaigns.

I acknowledge your point on the ease of obtaining legal advice regarding powers to prosecute. Whether we use prosecution as a tool to influence littering behaviour is not straightforward. We must consider the public interest in pursuing this option, including the cost and time necessary to achieve results. We are currently considering this option, and it may play a part in our approach to tackling littering on the network in the future.

I do hope this letter assures you we are proactively working towards a safer, cleaner and tidier network. If you would like any further information please contact Jackie Kilkenny, telephone number 0161 930 5728 or jackie.kilkenny@highwaysengland.co.uk

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is contained within a thin black rectangular border.

MIKE WILSON
CHIEF HIGHWAY ENGINEER