

Our ref: MPD 757831

Ed Vaisey MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Highways England
2nd Floor
Bridge House
1 Walnut Tree Close
Guildford GU1 4LZ

16 February 2018

Dear Mr Vaisey

A34 Litter

Thank you for your email 12 February to John Henderson together with an email from your constituent, Nigel Hawkey about the way we manage litter on the A34 between Milton Interchange and the M40. I am replying to you as this issue falls within my area of responsibility.

We share your concerns with regards to the amount of litter deposited on the strategic road network. Not only is it unsightly but it can also be an environmental hazard and does, of course, pose a road safety risk to those who have to clear it up. It is a challenging problem because if people didn't drop litter in the first place, it wouldn't need to be picked up and the time and money spent on collecting litter could be used for improvement schemes to help save lives or to benefit the economy.

Under the terms of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) Highways England is responsible for the management of litter on all of England's motorways. However, the responsibility for litter picking on the majority of trunk roads is the responsibility of the relevant local councils, including the A34.

The section of the A34 between Milton Interchange and the M40 falls under the jurisdiction of the Vale of White Horse, <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/> and Cherwell District Council, <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/>. We understand the difficulties faced by the councils and the risk to workers clearing litter alongside high-speed trunk roads. Due to these dangers and to help minimise the risks involved we advise the local councils about our forthcoming roadworks so they can plan their timetable for litter clearance and take advantage of our traffic management.

We also work alongside various anti-litter organisations such as Keep Britain Tidy and the Campaign to Protect Rural England to look at ways to jointly tackle the issue of litter. We also meet with local authorities to share ideas to combat the problem. On 2-4 March we will be taking part in the Great British Spring Clean.

We abide by the DEFRA Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse. This sets out recommendations for litter, including a grading system. We follow this, to ensure activities are prioritised accordingly. This requires us to ensure that our network is, so far as is practicable, regularly kept clear of litter.

Lorries travelling along our roads without properly netted loads are a major source of litter. Our inspection teams are also identifying haulage companies that have inadequate containment of loads.

Once the offenders are recognised, the relevant company will be contacted highlighting the implications of insufficient covered loads, possible penalties and the impact it has on our network.

Once again, thank you for your email. If you would like any further information please contact our Litter Champion, Anup Shrestha, who would be happy to help. He can be contacted by email by email at anup.shrestha@highwaysengland.co.uk

Yours sincerely

Anne Nugent

Mrs A E Nugent
Correspondence Executive Team