

Comments from cyclists in Taunton about the Market House cobbles

Comments from Facebook

Adrian Boliston

The cobbles leading up to the roundabout are not so bad but ones on the roundabout itself are laid with deep linear ridges designed to trap a bike tyre, especially when it is wet.

Chris Kurton

Dangerous for thin tyres.

Suzy Amys Kinsman

It may look pretty but for safety's sake it needs to be tarmac'd. I've hated it since the day the council came up with the stupid idea of cobbles. It's so slippery in the wet especially for small thin tyres.

Eddie White

I avoid it if I can. I remember when the T O B came to Taunton a few years back, the race leader crashed on them, he limped in about 20th after that.

Martine d'Hotman de Villiers

Dangerous for thin tyres, especially when wet.

Ryan Hobbs

Hideous to cycle over, especially for little wheels bikes aka Brompton which are common sense for people working in towns / kids' bikes!

Evelyn Honywill

They are dangerous for cyclists. Yr wheels seem to go in different directions. Horrendous when wet. I'm surprised there hasn't been more accidents!!! Council need to change back to tarmac ASAP.

Sam Cornwell

In 2013, my husband fell off his bicycle on the cobbles when they were wet and broke his arm.

Mandy Clements

These are really slippery when wet.

Helen O'toole

I hate cycling around here I always get off at the registry office and back on at TK Max, I'm always worried my wheels will go between the cobbles and I will come off, but it's all down to personal safety and choosing to get off and walk is my choice and I really don't mind doing it.

Wendy Shepherd

Not only bicyclist but for motor bikes dangerous bit of road.

Martin Peters

Sent this to fellow SWT Councillors - As a supporter of cycling and the Taunton Area Cycling Campaign (TACC) I would like to know whether the cobbled area around the Market House is being retained. If so, I would like an explanation. It is the most obvious example of infrastructure that discourages cycling. The comment on Facebook by TACC is included below. We say we are encouraging cycling for all the health and environmental benefits plus a reduction in congestion. I can understand a cobbled walkway by a historic cathedral in say Salisbury, but this cobbled road is an awful surface for cyclists at a major junction right in the centre of Taunton. I strongly advocated that all the CIL money of the Charter Trustees should be spent on cycle routes and walkways in Taunton. This was passed and amounted to £100,000. When you add the millions from the Future High Street Fund, a failure to provide a more suitable surface is just not acceptable.

Justin Poat

I wouldn't do it, been over then on a motorbike and it's far too sloppy, my sister actually came off her moped because of those cobbles.

Richard McLaughlin

Thomas Hall Thomas - if the road surface causes a cyclist to fall in front of a bus, then somebody's life may end. As a driver that will not happen. A cycling journey reduces congestion, cleans the air and reduces CO2 - how many more ways do you need?

Comments from July 2022 snapshot online survey

Feel unsafe particularly during wet weather. Uncomfortable ride when carrying shopping.

The cobbles are lethal for cyclists.

Cobbles!

The cobbles are so bumpy and dangerously slippery in wet weather and makes it impossible to signal to other motorists where you are exiting. Both hands need to be on the handlebars to be able to maintain control of the bike.

Cobbles make it very wobbly, can't take hand off handlebars to signal.

The cobbles and ridges between mean that the bike wheel gets stuck in the ruts and therefore difficult to steer. Need to hold very tight to handle-bars - therefore impossible to make signals to other road users. Also, very prone to wobbling across the traffic because to the ruts. Controlling, steering and hand signalling, keeping a good position especially when wet. Due to the very aggressive and slippery surface. It also hurts my damaged wrist.

Makes steering difficult so have to go really slowly.

Although my bike has wide tyres it feels very unstable and unsafe just at the point where I am closely surrounded by motor vehicles. This is because of the very uneven surface.

The cobbles are dangerous as I feel that my tyres will slip, especially in wet weather. Also, the jolting on my bike is uncomfortable and painful. I try to avoid cycling on this part whenever possible.

It's bumpy.

Danger of slipping in wet weather, very uncomfortable ride especially on small wheeled bike.

The cobbled surface is really slippery when wet.

Slippery when wet.

Vibration through seat handle bars for no suspension bike. Also bad for walkers on carnival night Traffic.

Hard to brake / adjust your line in the dry, and virtually impossible on a road bike in the rain.

The surface is not bike friendly, particularly road bikes which are expensive.

Surface unpredictable. Uncomfortable.

Death trap as it's so wobbly. Never risked going round in the rain.

Shakes my body so much I can hardly see.

Easy to trap tyres and slip in the wet.

Mainly an issue when wet as wheels slip into gaps between cobbles.

it is impossible to cycle on this bumpy surface so I have to cycle on the pavement instead.

At rush hour it far too busy and with the cobbles it makes me unstable and not confident.

In the wet the tyres slip when cornering even when going slowly. I find signalling difficult because I feel unstable without both hands on the handle bars.

It is dangerous in wet weather with a slippery uneven surface and the edges are not always at the same height, making it difficult to safely steer across the junction.

The vibration really affects your confidence and handling ability, especially in wet conditions. It generally makes signalling to advise other traffic of your intentions a bad idea due to the chance of losing it on the cobbles.

It's very slippery and doesn't feel safe.

In the dry it's uncomfortable riding over the cobbles and my bike feels unstable. In the wet my bike slips and the tyres catch down into the gaps between the cobbles. I feel I will fall off at any time. I ride a Brompton with small narrow wheels. Sometimes I get off and walk round because it

feels so unsafe - I don't want to wobble in front of a car. I've hated this ridiculous surface since the day they unveiled it.

It can be hard to hold a line and to remain balanced, it is very uncomfortable and there is the temptation to move off it to the left where it is smooth then necessitating a sudden rejoining of traffic. It is downright dangerous!

I feel it is very slippery when wet and I feel very unsafe going around it.

It's bumpy due to the road surfaces when cycling, unable to push a wheelchair on this surface and dangerous when driving a car on it as it is slippery.

MotorBike tyres slide during wet weather.

Very bumpy and extremely dangerous in wet weather. Cars don't expect you to be going to slowly so often get too close.

Comments at Eat Festival November 2021

1.Cobbles are cycle unfriendly
2. Cars driving too close on cobbles
3.The cobbles aren't cycle friendly. Safety concerns due to car drivers not giving cyclists enough space
4. The cobbles become slippery
5. Cars parked unloading junction blocking bike path
6. Cobbles are both uncomfortable to cycle on and dangerous when wet. Drivers often are not looking out for cyclists
7. Cycling on cobbles is dangerous! Car drivers who don't signal and don't give way to cyclists
8.
9. Cobbles good to slow cars but shouldn't be on cycle lanes
10. Too much traffic not enough cycle lane
11.I don't cycle over the cobbles as they shake you up and the ride is uncomfortable and feels vulnerable as you have to slow up to stay safe and cars are behind you
12. Very difficult –you have to look out for pedestrians, get onto the roundabout, avoid other traffic and concentrate on the rough grooves not sending you into a hole. Esp. bad when wet. How can it be this bad?

Comments in the Somerset Gazette 21-08-2022

DocSarvis8th August 4:14 pm

User ID: 1721399

It's no joke cycling over the roundabout with an impatient car, van or bus behind you, so I hope the relevant authorities can stop quibbling over the cost, which will be minor compared to all the money that can be magically pulled out of a hat to build new roads, and just get on with making this safer in

time for winter when there is a real possibility that more and more people will be taking to bikes because of the cost of living crisis.

Last Updated: 10th August 1:21 pm

shuunya8th August 4:52 pm

User ID: 202511

I am an experienced cyclist and find that the cobbles are dangerous. You have to attempt to travel around it by avoiding the crevices (so your bike wheel is not stuck), and watch out for motorists. This makes it virtually impossible to indicate my desired route to other cyclists and motorists. I have been very lucky not to have fallen off my bicycle. Those who say it is the size of wheel have to consider that the surface of the roundabout should be safe for all wheel sizes. I have a tourer bicycle and still find my travel around the roundabout dangerous. We should not exclude those who do not have a mountain bike. The point is the council have designed a cycle route and the most important part of it has been neglected. This is the middle of the town and a destination for many. If you want to encourage beginner cyclists do not leave this roundabout as it is.

Last Updated: 10th August 9:36 pm

Fiona Lewis9th August 8:24 am

User ID: 556888

The road surface is dangerous - which means that even the most careful of cyclists (or motorcyclists) cannot take evasive action safely when the behaviour of other road users puts them at risk. I had a nasty accident there on my way to work a few years ago - on a wet day, when a bus driver, having looked to check he was safe to pull out, decided an upcoming cyclist was something to ignore. As soon as I tried to swerve to get out of his way I was off - thrown in the air and landed on my helmeted head. I was wearing hi-vis, I was using sensible tyres. I was concussed for two days, which was a lucky escape. My point is, you can complain all you like about how entitled cyclists are, and how it's their own fault if they cycle too fast/have the wrong tyres etc, but if the road surface makes it impossible to take evasive action safely when another road user makes a mistake (I'm sure it was just a mistake - I'm not saying the bus driver had it in for cyclists) then it is not a safe road-surface. At the very least, there should be a "Warning: uneven road surface" sign so those who don't know the road have advance notice - then the helpful suggestion that we should just get off and walk might be a possibility. I am all for a new road-surface and a sensible, clearly signposted cycle lane would be most welcome - and probably one of the most well-used in town. I think the character of our town is unaffected by the presence or absence of an impractical decorative road surface - in fact it would be improved by making low-carbon transport safe for everyone.

Northtown Brummie9th August 11:53 am

User ID: 2312254

It's also very uncomfortable when riding an E-scooter across the roundabout. The bottom line is the present cobbled surface is below standard and unsafe for 2 wheeled transport, it needs replacing.

Last Updated: 10th August 1:21 pm