# North Somerset council apologises and scraps £1.5m wiggly road markings after public backlash



In a notable example of public backlash leading to policy reevaluation, North Somerset Council has reversed its controversial road markings scheme on the seafront at Clevedon, dubbed the 'yellow brick road'. Initially introduced in 2022 at a staggering cost of £1.5 million, the scheme featured wavy lines, a two-way cycle lane, and a one-way system, designed to slow traffic and deter roadside parking. However, the initiative quickly became a subject of ridicule and anger among residents who found it confusing and impractical.

The initial justification for the scheme centred around the claim that narrowing the perceived road width would reduce vehicle speeds. Yet, this approach was met with vociferous dissent as locals discovered that the new layout made it impossible to park facing the sea—something many residents and visitors enjoyed while taking in views across the Bristol Channel. The changes even led to safety concerns, with fears that cyclists could be endangered by parked vehicles obstructing their pathways.

Cathy Hawkins, a vocal critic and leader of the resident campaign group 'Save our Seafront', described the initiative as a "disaster" and a "complete waste of money". She expressed disappointment that the council had largely ignored community sentiments before proceeding with the project. "They are putting these schemes all over the country. This has got to stop," she remarked, calling for a greater alignment between council initiatives and public needs.

With mounting pressure, the council conducted an independent review which recommended significant changes. The proposed new plans aim to reinstate sea-facing parking, remove the unpopular two-way cycle path, and introduce a more conventional roundabout layout. As a result, work to undo the problematic elements of the original scheme commenced, costing an additional £500,000 and taking 13 weeks to complete.

In a statement reflecting on the council's missteps, North Somerset Council leader Mike Bell acknowledged, “We got it wrong,” apologising for the perceived failures of the £1.3 million scheme. He committed to promptly address community concerns, stating that future projects would incorporate better communication with the public before implementation.

This episode in Clevedon exemplifies how community feedback, when ignored, can lead to a costly misallocation of resources and subsequent public outrage. The re-engineering of the seafront road network signifies a critical pivot, not only for transport policy in North Somerset but also for the broader discourse on how local councils gauge public sentiment in the UK. As the council prepares to implement the new plans, it sets a precedent for more responsive governance, underscoring the importance of engaging with constituents to avoid similar pitfalls in the future.

With the council’s commitment to rectify the earlier scheme, residents and visitors alike are hopeful for a more functional and visually appealing Clevedon seafront, free from the frustrations of the notorious wiggly lines.

### Reference Map

1. [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14727655/Britains-daftest-road-markings-finally-removed-council-spent-1-5m-wiggly-lines-left-drivers-cyclists-baffled.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
2. [[2]](https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2023-11-20/we-got-it-wrong-council-leader-apologises-for-13m-wiggly-line-scheme)
3. [[3]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn5rv624le7o)
4. [[4]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/11/21/yellow-brick-road-markings-scrapped-15m-council-blunder/)
5. [[5]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4g3eq0xdx8o)
6. [[6]](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp9rv0nxv54o)
7. [[7]](https://www.northsomersettimes.co.uk/news/24219154.north-somerset-council-reverse-clevedon-yellow-brick-road-scheme/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14727655/Britains-daftest-road-markings-finally-removed-council-spent-1-5m-wiggly-lines-left-drivers-cyclists-baffled.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.itv.com/news/westcountry/2023-11-20/we-got-it-wrong-council-leader-apologises-for-13m-wiggly-line-scheme> - North Somerset Council leader Mike Bell apologized for the £1.3 million 'wiggly line' scheme in Clevedon, acknowledging mistakes and pledging to find funds to rectify the issues. An independent review recommended reinstating angled parking spaces, removing the two-way cycle lane, and introducing a coach pick-up and drop-off point. The council plans to implement these changes to address community concerns and improve the seafront area.
3. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cn5rv624le7o> - Residents in Clevedon have been presented with plans to replace the controversial 'wiggly lines' road markings introduced in 2022. The £1 million scheme, which included a segregated two-way cycle lane and wavy road markings, faced criticism from locals. The proposed changes involve reintroducing sea-facing parking, removing the two-way cycle path, and installing a physical mini roundabout. The council aims to begin work in February 2025, with completion expected by summer 2025.
4. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/11/21/yellow-brick-road-markings-scrapped-15m-council-blunder/> - North Somerset Council is set to scrap the controversial 'yellow brick road' markings along Clevedon seafront, following widespread criticism and mockery from residents. The scheme, which cost £1.5 million, introduced wavy road markings and a segregated cycle lane, leading to confusion among drivers and cyclists. An independent review recommended removing the two-way cycle lane, reinstating angled parking, and improving the roundabout layout. The council plans to implement these changes to address community concerns.
5. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4g3eq0xdx8o> - Work to reverse the controversial 'wiggly' road markings at Clevedon's seafront is set to commence next month. The original scheme, introduced in 2022, included wavy lines, a two-way cycle path, and a one-way system, which faced significant public backlash. The council plans to reintroduce sea-facing parking, remove the two-way cycle path, and adjust the roundabout to a traditional layout. The project is expected to be completed within 12 weeks, with sections of the road closed temporarily during the works.
6. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cp9rv0nxv54o> - Clevedon residents have been given a first look at plans to replace the controversial 'wiggly lines' road markings introduced in 2022. The £1 million scheme, which included a segregated two-way cycle lane and wavy road markings, faced criticism from locals. The proposed changes involve reintroducing sea-facing parking, removing the two-way cycle path, and installing a physical mini roundabout. The council aims to begin work in February 2025, with completion expected by summer 2025.
7. <https://www.northsomersettimes.co.uk/news/24219154.north-somerset-council-reverse-clevedon-yellow-brick-road-scheme/> - North Somerset Council has approved spending £425,000 to reverse the controversial 'yellow brick road' scheme along Clevedon seafront. The original scheme, which included wavy lines and a segregated cycle lane, faced significant public criticism. The reversal plans involve reinstating sea-facing parking, removing the two-way cycle path, and adjusting the roundabout to a traditional layout. The council aims to implement these changes to address community concerns and improve the seafront area.