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M25 diversion cost me £12.50 ULEZ charge

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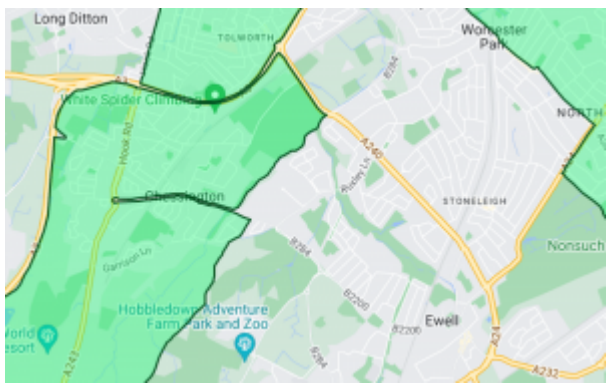

Driven to despair and a £12.50 charge, Dorset pensioner complains to Transport for London for inadequate signs before the ULEZ charging A243 at the Hook Junction with the A3. She thanks Epsom and Ewell Times for a better explanation of the zone than provided by TfL.

In fact the TfL explanation has some clarity:

“Rushett Lane is outside the ULEZ. At the junction with the A243, the A243 going north is inside the zone, while going south it is outside the zone. Fairoak Lane is outside the zone.”

Moreover, Surrey County Council, as an Highway Authority, has indicated an unwillingness to cooperate with the warning signage.

Here is her story of woe:

Dear Editor,

I found clearer information from your on-line newspaper than I could from the TfL website.

It’s probably a waste of breath on my part but if there is a local battle in the Epsom area to have this phallic extension of the Ulez zone sticking out into Surrey, then count me in. I presume it’s to clobber all the tourists going to Chessington Zoo!

On Saturday February 3rd I paid the Ulez congestion charge because I believe my husband and I accidentally drove into the Ulez zone at Hook Junction on the A3 in Surrey without realising it. We had driven up from Dorset on Friday to East Molesey which is outside the Ulez Zone. Then on Saturday morning I took the train from Hampton Court to Vauxhall to pick up my younger son’s dog. However there was chaos on the railway in that area due to trespassers on the line and after several hours of delays I finally got a train back to Esher (instead of Hampton Court) where my husband picked me up. We don’t normally travel into East Molesey via Esher but was assured by my son that it was outside the Ulez Zone. At the Scilly Isles Roundabout we became confused by signs telling us to follow M25 diversion and joined the Kingston By Pass for a short distance which swept us into the Hook Junction interchange. We did not see any Ulez signs en route so just followed the M25 diversion signs which led us down the A243 past Chessington Zoo and eventually to the M25. We later discovered this was to help motorists avoid extreme traffic congestion at Junction 10 on the M25/A3.

When we got home I checked the Ulez map on my computer because we had heard about an extension of the Ulez zone into Surrey from the Surbiton area and while the online maps lack detail it seemed to me that a short length of the A243 Hook Road running south i.e. away from London has been placed inside the Ulez zone, and by following the diversion signs we had accidentally entered the zone for a mile or so.

I have had no choice but to pay the congestion charge or risk being fined, but I do think it is unfair to place M25 diversion signs on major roundabouts without warning that the diversion can take you through a section of the Ulez zone that isn’t even in Greater London.

Out of London visiting pensioners like ourselves, still driving government recommended diesel cars, rely on clear road signs, not trying to read an almost illegible Ulez on-line map on an iPhone.

Yours.

Mrs Geraldine Osment

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