

Drivers claim ten-metre car-free route is a money-making scam

£50 pain over tiny bus lane

EVEN the most plodding of motorists could drive it in just a few seconds.

At 10m (33ft) long, this is the country's shortest bus lane – but cross it at your peril.

Making the short hop across means a £50 fine and almost 300 drivers have already been caught doing so to avoid a 3km (two-mile) detour.

Complaints are now soaring as homeowners claim it was set up as a town hall money-making 'scam'.

The lane was created a fortnight ago at the entrance to an estate, halfway along a road in Wixams, Bedfordshire.

The restriction, which is con-

by **AIDAN RADNEDGE**

trolled by cameras, has been narrowed, painted red and marked 'bus only'.

Just two buses an hour use it at peak times – and none at night, although residents are still banned from using the short route.

Katie Baughan, 32, was shocked to receive a £50 fine after driving through the bus lane last week.

'It's nonsense and completely pointless, you can drive either side of this red strip but not through it without getting a ticket,' she said.

'It is completely ridiculous



Gotcha: A van crosses the tiny bus lane and (inset right) the camera snapping the drivers who do the same PICTURE: MASON'S

to have such a short bus lane.' Marie Jepps, 68, whose husband David was also fined, said: 'It is ludicrous. I think it is just another way to get money out of people.'

Bedford borough council defended its decision to introduce the lane, saying it was created to improve safety and

bus punctuality, ease congestion and keep the lanes clear for emergency vehicles.

'There is no excuse for not realising you are driving illegally in a bus lane and it is right that we will take action to keep our roads safe for the majority of road users,' said a spokesman.

