

# SPOKES

## Bulletin 92 Late 2005

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 [This is a postal address / answerphone - SPOKES is a voluntary body with no staff] www.spokes.org.uk spokes@spokes.org.uk

### CAMPAIGN ASTRAY

*"Cycling to work across Edinburgh yesterday I witnessed two cars and one large truck going through red lights, at least 20 vehicles significantly breaking the 30mph limit, one car swerving into my path after overtaking in a residential street on a blind corner, and 3 one-handed drivers chatting on mobile phones. This journey is not unusual - it is what a cyclist has to deal with every day."*

This is just one of a spate of angry letters from cyclists to the police [copied to Spokes] about the campaign "to protect people who commute by bike" [Evening News 20.9.05]. The campaign entailed a week of cyclist education then one of "extra officers deployed to catch cyclists flaunting the law."

The police initiative followed startling headline figures of 164 cyclist serious injuries and 9 deaths in Lothian and Borders in 2000-2005, compared to 57 and 1 in 1995-2000.

**Many cyclists were flatly bewildered by the campaign.** Who is to be educated? - cyclists. Who is to be arrested? - cyclists. But what and who is causing the injuries and the deaths? - motor vehicles and their drivers!

Yet new government research shows driving standards declining [LTT 15.9.05]. And mobile phone use - handheld or handsfree - is a severe and uncurbed new danger [p4]. **Richard Brunstrom**, of the Assn of Chief Police Officers, points out that road death is a huge killer, and that all police officers take an oath on joining, to protect life [LTT 17.6.4].

Newspapers attributed rising casualties to more bike use - at least doubled, says the council. But the casualty figures are now disputed: other data shows total casualties falling, though with a modest rise in serious injury [Dept of Transport data, mj\_wardlaw@hotmail.com]. Clearly research is vital, e.g. location and ages, since more bike use usually means more safety per cyclist and, often, greater net safety [Spokes 87].

For example, is danger rising in **main corridors** between Edinburgh and surrounding areas [A8, A7, A71, A90, etc], a source of much complaint, where Spokes is urging a major quality-cycleroute project [Spokes 91]. Or on **rural roads**, increasingly unsafe for both cars and bikes [Spokes 85], but with inaction on speeds; e.g. West Lothian Council's Quiet Roads Initiative [Spokes 81] has been quietly dropped. Or are some cyclists or drivers **overconfident** due to helmet use - which parallels the rise in serious injury and death? [p4]

Council leader **Cllr Donald Anderson** has ordered a full police report on bike casualties and what can be done.

**Obviously, Spokes urges all cyclists to cycle sensibly, considerately and legally. Police advice and adult cycle training opportunities are very welcome. However, to cut death and injury the real dangers must be identified, and the real criminals seen to be the top police target.**

**Useful contacts...** Reporting dangerous drivers: 0800.555.111  
 Adult car-training: Inst. of Advanced Motorists www.iam.org.uk  
 Adult bike-training: training@scottishcycling.co.uk 0141 2295359

### Inside Spokes 92 ...

**Public Meeting:** p2 - Going by Bike for Everyone

**Special feature:** p3 - Try Cycling in Edinburgh

**Centre pages:** p5 - Cycling Delight



North Edinburgh signs - one of nearly 100 Sustrans Scotland 2004/5 projects, ranging from maps to new routes, funded by the Scottish Executive. "High standard, on budget and in tight timescales" said the Minister. **So why the delay announcing the 05/06 money? See p7 [new minister] for how you can help!**

### REALITY CHECK

It's all too easy and common to suggest cycling is very dangerous and only for the foolhardy. Unfortunately even stories like our main article can add to this false notion.

Of course every step must be taken to prevent crashes - **but sensible considerate cycling is actually very safe.** The usual statistic, *injuries per mile*, is misleading since distance travelled in walking or cycling is less than when driving. Indeed taking instead *annual death risk*, danger for a regular cyclist is similar to that for a regular motorist - one death every 20,000 years [Spokes 85,87].

But, if cycling really worries you, why not do something obviously safe instead - like tending the garden? Sadly, 5% of gardeners in a recent survey needed medical care for a related injury, but only 4% of cyclists! [Spokes 85]. And a recent Lothian hospitals study [p4 - Scot Exec] implies you'd only expect to be kept in hospital for a cycling injury about once in every 5-10 lifetimes, though it forgets to say so!

**On top of that, add the health and happiness benefits.** As the respected consumer magazine *Which* put it [July 05], "If you cycle on a regular basis - say a daily commute or to the shops - you'll enjoy a fitness level of a person 10 years younger ... So trade in your gym subscription and forget the scare stories: the health benefits of cycling significantly outweigh the risks on British roads."

**Help SPOKES, other cyclists, and yourself by writing to your MSP, MP, councillor and the press every so often. See back page for contacts. Ask your MSP / MP to raise your questions with the relevant minister. Send us the results!!**

**ABBREVIATIONS USED IN BULLETIN**

<b>H</b> The Herald	<b>LTT</b> Local Transport Today
<b>G</b> The Guardian	<b>SE</b> Scottish Executive
<b>SH</b> Sunday Herald	<b>DTLR</b> Dept of Transport UK
<b>TS</b> TRANSform Scotland	<b>STR</b> Scottish Transport Review

**FOR YOUR DIARY**

**Spokes Sunday Rides** [www.snowcycle.co.uk](http://www.snowcycle.co.uk) Normally 1st Sun each month. Meet 10am, Usher Hall, Lothian Rd. Fairly gentle rides, 30-40 miles. Lunch at pub/café, or bring picnic. Showers won't stop us, but real bad weather may cause cancellation. We show the way, help with breakdowns, wait for the less-speedy, and aim for a fantastic time! **You must** ensure your bike is in good order, and ride considerably and carefully. **You are entirely responsible for your own safety.** If under 14 or unused to roads you must come with an adult.

More info: [stuart@snowcycle.co.uk](mailto:stuart@snowcycle.co.uk) 445.7073.

Dates: Dec 4, Jan 8 [not 1st], Feb 5, Mar 5.

**Weekends away** Occasional weekends may be organised by individuals. [Paul.McGuire@ed.ac.uk](mailto:Paul.McGuire@ed.ac.uk), [Stuart@snowcycle.co.uk](mailto:Stuart@snowcycle.co.uk).

**Easy Rides** Usually 15-20 miles on paths & quiet roads, some Saturdays 10-3. [Chris.Pearson@bcs.org.uk](mailto:Chris.Pearson@bcs.org.uk)

**Go-Bike!** Strathclyde Cycle Campaign rides. 1st Sunday + some others. [www.gobike.org](http://www.gobike.org) 07932.460093 [info@gobike.org](mailto:info@gobike.org).

**Events general** [edinburgh-bicycle.co.uk/resource/whats\\_on.html](http://edinburgh-bicycle.co.uk/resource/whats_on.html)

**Nov 8 Rail/tram plans in SE Scotland** CRAG /TransForm speakers/discussion. 7.30 City Chambers [coffee 7pm]. More info: [patrickh@6brc.freemove.co.uk](mailto:patrickh@6brc.freemove.co.uk) 558.8042.

**Nov 16 Delivering Transport Priorities for Scotland** STSG Conference, Falkirk. [www.stsg.org](http://www.stsg.org) 0870.350.4202.

**Nov 20 Road Crash Victims World Remembrance Day** Contact 020.8838.5102 [www.roadpeace.org](http://www.roadpeace.org) for info on events, or if you can organise something locally.

**RoadPeace**, the national charity for road victims and against road danger has produced some powerful posters on speeding and aggressive driving. 'Speeding contributes to more violent deaths than gun and knife crime combined' ... 'Who is next?' From: 020.8838.5102 [www.roadpeace.org](http://www.roadpeace.org).

Their excellent **annual lecture Road Crime - a neglected social justice and public health challenge** by epidemiology professor Ian Roberts can be downloaded, in sound, not text, at [www.archive.org/audio](http://www.archive.org/audio) [search for RoadPeace in AllMedia]

**Nov 25 The Nottingham Tram** Andy Wood, manager of Transdev who operate Nottingham and will run Edinburgh trams - a chance to ask about bike issues. LRTA meeting, 7.30, Friends Mtg House, Victoria Ter. 538.2375 [www.lrtat.org](http://www.lrtat.org)

**Nov 30, Weds: SPOKES PUBLIC MEETING**

**Going by Bike for Everyone**

Venue: St Augustine's Church, George IV Bridge

Time: 7.30 [open 6.45 for coffee, stall, chat]

New bike lanes and other facilities are vital to make cycling look and feel a welcoming option for everyday travel. But now, in addition, more and more people-based initiatives are getting underway to encourage everyone to use their bikes. Come and hear from four of them - and join the discussion.

✳ **TryCyclinginEdinburgh** - Maggie Wynn - see page 7.

✳ **The Bike Station** - Mark Sydenham - see Spokes 91 or [www.thebikestation.org.uk](http://www.thebikestation.org.uk)

✳ **Get Active Getting There** - Kate Fearnley - Sustrans North Edinburgh project [www.activetravelscotland.org.uk](http://www.activetravelscotland.org.uk). [Members will get the super project map/leaflet in this mailing].

✳ **Edinburgh Council Staff Bike Use** - Janice Pauwels - promoting bike use at new Waverley Valley council HQ.

**Dec 3 Climate Change Rally** Talks start in Montreal on a post-Kyoto treaty. This will be marked by events round the world. Edinb contact - [gavin\\_pms@hotmail.com](mailto:gavin_pms@hotmail.com) 07966 485368

**Dec 7 Cycle Network Day** Paths for All, seminar for cycle officers and others. £40. 01259 218888 [www.pathsforall.org.uk](http://www.pathsforall.org.uk)

**Dec 13 Edinburgh Tram Projects** Barry Cross, TIE. Your chance to influence issues such as bike carriage, Princes St cycle routes, etc. Details/contact as Nov 8 CRAG meeting.

**Jan 10 Conservative view of Transport** David Davidson MSP, City Chambers 6pm [coffee 5.30]. 01383 825510.

**2006 CRAG ... excellent programme** [details/info as Nov 8]

**Jan 10 Andrew Burns** - the planned 'Transport Edinburgh'

**Feb 14 Evening News** - transport and the press

**Mar 14 Sarah Boyack MSP** [p7] - transport in the Parliament

**Apr 11 Malcolm Reed** [head of new Scottish Transport Agency]

**Mar 5-10 Velo Mondial** conference, Cape Town. Theme: 'Towards Prosperity' - integrating bikes into urban and rural development worldwide [www.velomondial2006.com](http://www.velomondial2006.com).

**June 17-25 National Bike Week** [www.bikeweek.org.uk](http://www.bikeweek.org.uk)

**Educational Train** A major 2006 rail tour of east European countries to highlight sustainable transport and climate change issues. [www.worldcarfree.net/onthetrain](http://www.worldcarfree.net/onthetrain).

**BIKEROUTE PUBLICATIONS**

**Ideas to plan your summer holiday - or winter weekend!**

**Bike Scotland Book One**, Fergal MacErlean £5.99, ISBN 0954421787. 40 routes in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth areas. We particularly like this book as virtually all the rides start at a rail station. It's very well presented, includes geology, wildlife and history details - and has a nice mention of Spokes! **Special offer for Spokes readers** - see ad on p6.



[www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

The Sustrans interactive maps now show National Trust and Historic Scotland properties, youth hostels,

RSPB/Wildlife Trust reserves, Soil Assn farms, rail stations, and more! Sustrans maps can also be purchased at the site - **Coast and Castles [Forth and Tyne]** is just updated, £5.99.

**Sustrans Scotland new free route leaflets:** Balerno to Bathgate (on Sustrans route 75); Dalkeith to Penicuik (on route 73). 0845.1130065 [www.nationalcyclenetwork.org.uk](http://www.nationalcyclenetwork.org.uk).

**JUST OUT** - New **Spokes West Lothian Map** [ad on p6] Fully updated plus all the features of our other recent maps.

**CYCLE/RAIL 2005 AWARDS**

Spokes has nominated **First ScotRail** for an award. Whilst nothing is perfect, progress is very pleasing [also Spokes 91]

- ✳ Significantly more on-train bike spaces on many routes
- ✳ Continued free cycle-carriage (including on sleepers)
- ✳ Free bike rescue if stuck when on a bike/rail trip
- ✳ Cycle parking provided at most Scottish stations
- ✳ Positive coverage of bike/rail in 1st ScotRail newsletter
- ✳ Sustrans routes to stations on 1st ScotRail website
- ✳ Forthcoming Cycle Forum to consult cyclists.

1st ScotRail queries: [scotrailcustomer.relations@firstgroup.com](mailto:scotrailcustomer.relations@firstgroup.com).

**SPOKES MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

Members whose mailing includes a renewal form haven't yet rejoined for 2005 according to our records. Please do now! Uptodate members will receive a renewal form in February.

**SPOKES BULLETIN INFORMATION**

**Editor:** Dave du Feu **Printer:** Barr Printers **Print run:** 11,500

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## TRYCYCLING IN EDINBURGH .....why don't you?

This question has been asked hundreds of times this summer by volunteers promoting cycling at a number of Edinburgh's outdoor festivals.

Including the Festival Cavalcade, the Try Cycling message was seen by up to 150,000 people.

So why was this question being asked? Instead of a cyclefest, Edinburgh cycling organisations joined forces to mount a presence at various summer festivals and the Cavalcade. Attending these events was considered a more effective way of reaching a wider audience.

Initially seed-funded by SPOKES, the project, called TryCyclinginEdinburgh, also rapidly gained a pilot grant from the City of Edinburgh Council, and lots of support from the Bike Station, Sustrans, CTC, Cycling Scotland and Edinburgh Road Club.

The stall is manned largely by volunteers from these organisations and general cycling enthusiasts. The joint cooperation means that it is possible to offer a wide range of leaflets, maps, bicycles-to-try and general advice.

We've tried to offer something for everyone from the most experienced cyclist to the complete novice.

A questionnaire was devised to measure factors affecting people's decisions whether to cycle. About a third of the respondents have said they don't currently cycle to work/ study, but would like to.

The results have provided a good picture of the levels of demand for various cycling activities that could support new and nervous cyclists. These activities include cycle skills training, basic cycle maintenance and gentle social rides along the off road path network.

TryCycling in Edinburgh is presently a pilot campaign. The success so far bears out our feeling that enthusiastic cyclists are the best people to 'sell' cycling.

We are now planning a programme of stalls, activities, social rides and some new ideas for next year and will need lots of help from SPOKES members. The next Bulletin will include further details.

Hopefully, in the not too distant future there may be another article in Spokes that will read TRIEDCYCLING IN EDINBURGH.... loved it!

For more information please see the web site: [www.trycyclinginedinburgh.org.uk](http://www.trycyclinginedinburgh.org.uk), or leave a message for the co-ordinator Maggie Wynn on **0131 313 2114**.

## ROAD DANGER ctd from p1

If these issues concern you, write to your MSP and MP [contacts - p8]. Copy to Spokes your letter and the reply.

### ARE HELMETS THE ANSWER?

Helmets seem obvious, are heavily promoted by makers and the 'road safety industry', and featured strongly in the recent police drive [p1]. Clearly, a helmet can help at times - e.g. if you fall off and bash your head on the pavement, the type of crash for which helmets are designed.

However the reported rise in bike casualties, and in the percent which are deaths or serious injury, came at the same time as a big increase in helmet wearing - hardly suggesting a major protective effect. Meanwhile pedestrian casualties fell - despite no rise in pedestrian helmet wearing!

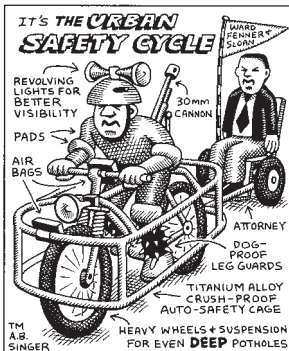
Perverse it seems, but **increasing death alongside rising helmet use is common**. The site [www.cyclehelmets.org](http://www.cyclehelmets.org), created by doctors and statisticians concerned at helmet-use giving a false sense of security, and at non-evidence-based thinking, has examples from the UK, US and Australia [contact mj\_wardlaw@hotmail.com for data, in letter to police].

The medical profession is split: the **BMA** supported compulsory helmets, after a 4-minute debate at its annual meeting; whilst the **RCGP** [Royal College of General Practitioners] carefully reviewed the evidence and decided to stay neutral [CCN Sept 05]. **Dr Stephen Watkins**, National Transport & Health Study Group chair, branded the BMA decision an "unscientific stance which will do great harm."

Two new government reports also raise questions over the net benefits of helmet-use. One shows 2002 helmet-wearing rates on UK major built-up roads at 25.1%, and 9.5% on minor built-up. The other, cycle-related hospital admissions 03/04, Lothian and Borders, found that of those injured on main roads 43% were using a helmet, and 29% on side roads. It seems you are more likely to end up in hospital if you wear a helmet! The data from the two reports are not properly comparable, but the picture is so stark that research is clearly needed. Unfortunately, official views on helmets are so rigid that the researchers seem not to have noticed the startling implications! [Reports - *TRL578* and *Scot Exec, Extent and Severity of Cycle Accident Casualties*].

Perhaps surprisingly, however, a **ROSPA** spokesperson said of the hospitals report, "when you get run down by a lorry or speeding car, a helmet isn't going to protect you" - though he said the figures do suggest reduced head injury if you fall off your bike when cycling off-road. [H 10.8.5]

**It is not known why the facts are so unintuitive: the government should be researching this instead of using helmet-wearing levels as an indicator of safety.** Possible reasons are overconfidence in helmets by cyclists and/or by car drivers [Spokes 84], greater likelihood of rotational brain injury (very serious), or helmet discomfort/distraction.



www.worldcarfree.net

**Until the facts are clearer, police campaigns promoting helmets may do more harm than good, giving a false sense of security to cyclists and to non-cycling parents. Many now pay more attention to helmets than to bike maintenance, wise road use and bright/reflective clothing.**

Fortunately, as Which concluded, "one thing both sides agree on is that the health benefits of cycling - helmeted or not - far outweigh the dangers." [July 05, 0845.307.4000].

**For a full, referenced summary of current knowledge on helmet issues see [www.cyclehelmets.org/papers/d1139.pdf](http://www.cyclehelmets.org/papers/d1139.pdf).**

### MOBILES: THE NEW ALCOHOL

Recent insurance industry research [published in BMJ] confirms the grave danger of using a mobile (handheld or handsfree) when driving: you are 4 times as likely to have a crash requiring hospital attendance [CCN Sept 05].

Disgracefully, the government knew well the dangers of handsfree sets when it legislated against using a handheld, as Spokes and many others pointed out. Official research had shown mobile use to be more dangerous in some ways than driving over the alcohol limit - and that handsfree was in some respects even worse. [Transport Research Lab report *TRL547, How Dangerous is Driving with a Mobile Phone*, £40, 01344.770783 - brief extracts in Spokesworker 17.11.02].

The law took effect in Dec 03 but new research [TRL635] shows enforcement was lax, with handheld use only down 25% between Sep 03 and Apr 04. **And handsfree use rose by almost as much - so the government has in effect allowed the mobile menace to continue unabated.**

### END THE BODY-COUNTS

Government rules say a fixed speed camera cannot be installed without at least 4 deaths or serious injuries. Yet, despite press and motoring organisation hysteria, polls consistently show around 75% support for cameras. Research also shows speed to be the best predictor of crash risk and the most important contributory factor in fatal crashes.

Now the government is to review the rules, and groups such as **Sustrans**, **ETA** [see advert p6] and **CTC** want the body-counts rule dropped. **To help**, contact your MP. See [www.slower-speeds.or.uk/endthebodycounts](http://www.slower-speeds.or.uk/endthebodycounts) 0845 3458459.

### IRRESPONSIBLE CYCLISTS ?

Transport Research Lab leaflet *LF2086* reports that of adult road accident fatalities **cyclists had by far the lowest blood alcohol levels** - only 14% of cyclist fatalities were over the 80mg/100ml legal limit, compared to 23% of motorist fatalities and 35% of pedestrians. Enough said!!

### RESPONSIBLE CAR MAKERS ?

We have reported that many makers sell to the public cars which are severely dangerous to pedestrians [Spokes 91]. **Audi, Skoda and Suzuki**, for example, sell cars scoring zero out of 5 for pedestrian protection. Hit by a car at only 25mph this means almost certain death or serious injury, whereas injury would be slight in most cases with a top-rated car. **Tighter safety regulations apply in every other area of life - how do the car-builders get away with it?**

At last Europe is planning a directive to require a basic level of pedestrian protection in all new cars by 2010 - costing an average £53 per car and estimated to stop 1300 deaths and 34000 serious injuries a year in Europe alone. **Manufacturers' organisation ACEA is lobbying hard to water down the regulations** [RoadPeace, summer 2005].

Even *Which*, despite having done much on pedestrian safety, almost wholly omits it in the annual *Which Car* - though readers are advised on appearance, 'niggles,' etc!



## CYCLING DELIGHT

### MAXINE BANGS HER HEAD??

*"I have a stressful job, but each morning and evening I have 35 minutes of almost perfect peace. I'm lucky to live where I do, so the river is my cyclerooute to work. But to be honest it's hardly luck - I researched my new home well.*

*Please forgive me if I enthuse ... I see fishermen, herons, dog-walkers, old friends, children having fun, river traffic, men at work. Sometimes I arrive so happy that colleagues think I've had a bang on the head! I just can't understand the reluctance of people to get close, to their world, to savour it first hand instead of in a metal cocoon.*

*Cycling is the best way by far to experience this wonder despite a busy work schedule, without any significant cost, and to get some exercise in the process.*

***So if you don't do it already - try riding to work!"***

[thanks to Merseyside Pedal Press, Summer 05 - shortened to fit]

### BE SMART / BE (B)RIGHT



*'A cyclist is a pointer to a healthier, friendlier, more civilised future'. Yes, we do pat ourselves on the back, and rightly so! But, sadly, Spokes also gets complaints of 'inconsiderate cyclists', law-breaking, etc.*

Of course, probably as many or more motorists break the speed limit as cyclists use the pavement or jump lights - and they are far more likely to cause death and injury. Cyclists and motorists are people - good and bad, sensible and stupid, and many are both cyclist and motorist. ***But, for the record, we would like to think that Spokes members are among the more sensible and the more considerate, whether cycling, walking or driving!!***

We urge all readers to observe these simple rules...

- ✿ **Whether walking, cycling or driving, be considerate to people around you.** Walkers may be daydreaming (it makes sense, especially in a park), motorists may be frustrated and/or suffering from exhaust fumes building up in their restricted enclosure, cyclists may need space to get past on a path or road. Be a kind, helpful person!!
- ✿ **Whether cycling or driving, stick to the rules of the road and be predictable.** Use lane discipline, don't break speed limits, don't jump lights, don't drive onto pavements or cycle along them (unless officially shared), switch on your lights if it's dark. Get home safely - don't risk attack by a frustrated driver or collision because you were somewhere unexpected. Don't cause a driver to become angry - they may take it out on the next cyclist. [Road-raged cyclists see [www.ragingbike.co.uk](http://www.ragingbike.co.uk)].

**Note:** Spokes has a factsheet on **how to use shared paths** - all new members are sent a copy, or send an SAE for one. Also, the new **SNH Outdoor Access Code** [Spokes 91] will go to members with this mailing, or contact 01738 458545.

### LOOK AT ME IN MY 4X4!!

*"My dad bought me it, and I hate it. I feel really old in it and if guys see me they think I'm married with children ... it has to go."* Rona Blair, Livingston sales assistant [H 23.5.05].

**Note:** for safety facts on 4x4s, see Spokes 91 and 87.

## THE BEST INVENTION EVER

**Lord Alec Broers** used 2005's prestigious Radio 4 Reith Lectures to try to correct "a failure of serious dimensions" in public understanding of technology. He saw this public failing in a poll which chose the bike as the greatest British invention - he felt it was not even a serious contender.

After his lectures Radio 4's *You and Yours* ran another poll, to see if he had indeed changed public perceptions. The result? Listeners liked the bike's universality of use, simplicity of design, and environmental value; **and of 4500 listeners, 58% voted the bike the greatest post-1800 technological innovation!** [www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/reith2005](http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/reith2005)

## MY FAVOURITE BIKE RIDE

Spokes thanks all who put in the effort to enter our competition. Sorry if you didn't hear about it - sign up for *Spokesworker* not to miss future notices! [send 10 SAEs for paper copies or email [spokes@spokes.org.uk](mailto:spokes@spokes.org.uk)] The rides were judged mainly on the features en route, and the enthusiasm of the description. We had great fun judging, and hope to publish the best rides. **We thank the following sponsors...**

- ✿ [www.theparkbistro.com](http://www.theparkbistro.com) canal-side restaurant just before Linlithgow, with bike parking. 01506.846666.
- ✿ [www.kalpnarestaurant.com](http://www.kalpnarestaurant.com) Indian vegetarian restaurant, roadside bike parking nearby. 0131.6679890
- ✿ [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk) 0845.113.0065 the fantastic cycling/ sustainable transport charity - cycle map prizes.

**Top winner was Dan Ogilvy with *The Wow Edinburgh Ride***, a mainly car-free circular from Haymarket Station via Newhaven [photo], Leith docks and Holyrood Park. *"In the city yet away from it: Haymarket buzz, Newhaven harbour peace, Leith bustle, Arthur's Seat grandeur - It's a Wow!"*



photo: Tim Smith

Dan is a former bus driver, now a mental health worker.

**Second, Malcolm Bruce's *Haymarket circular via Linlithgow*.** Train to Linlithgow then via canal, Hopetoun, Dalmeny Estate and the Roseburn path. *"Wildlife - bats, buzzards, badgers; Tamelife - ponies, parrots, people; Diversions - Dundas Castle, N Queensferry, Zeebrugge; End - pint of IPA with companions at Haymarket."* Malcolm works in education, is a longtime Spokes member and was famed for his cycling cries... *"Cyclists forever!"*

**Other prizewinners (in order) were...**

**Tony Grant, *W Lothian Coast & Castles*** Dalmeny Stn circular  
**Goff Cantley, *Pentland High Road Circuit*** Colinton circular  
**Harris Keiller, *10K Traffic-Free*** Winton, Morton, Mortonhall  
**Peter Hawkins, *Newbridge Nae-hassle*** circular from Roseburn [Peter offers to lead you on this route, with free coffee 443.6712]  
**Gordon Davies, *Mortonhall Estate*** great views ideal for novices.

# Ready For The Dry Season?

With 20 styles of breathable waterproof jackets and 6 overtrouser options to choose from, Edinburgh Bicycle's new winter range will help keep you dry and comfortable, whatever the weather.

**Check our NEW exclusive Protective Victoria Jacket £59.95.**

(Sizes S-XL unisex. Available in Black or Yellow.)

'For everyday commuting use we'd go for the Edinburgh Bicycle Co-operative's Protective Victoria jacket at £59.95 (in black or hi-viz yellow). It's a great solid jacket - keeps you warm and dry, and should last for years.' Singletrack magazine: October 2005.

**www.edinburghbicycle.com**

Whitehouse Loan, Bruntsfield Links, Edinburgh.

Prices correct at time of print, October 2005.



## NEW BIKE BOOK OFFER

**BIKE SCOTLAND BOOK ONE: 40 GREAT ROUTES FROM CENTRAL SCOTLAND** by Fergal MacErean contains an inspiring collection of on- and off-road routes across some of the best cycling country in central Scotland - from Arran through Loch Lomond & the Trossachs to Edinburgh and Perthshire. All routes are accessible from train stations and accompanied by stunning colour photos and contoured maps. Bike Scotland can be yours for the special price of **£5\*** inclusive of P&P. Simply send a cheque made payable to **Pocket Mountains Ltd to 6 Church Wynd, Bo'ness EH51 0AN** (don't forget to tell us your address).



\*usual mp £5.99

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£12 for three, or £15 for four.**

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www.citycarclubs.co.uk**

*"I resigned from the AA in protest at their roads policy. I did so with trepidation, wondering how good other bodies would be ... My worries were groundless!"*

## Environmental Transport Association

**Membership includes:** magazine; legal expenses for injuries when walking, cycling, bussing, etc; lobbying for sustainable transport; supporting Green Transport Week.

**Extras:** Bicycle insurance; RoadRescue - car or bike - average rescue time 35minutes; travel insurance.

**To join, phone 0800.212.810 - quote Spokes 1452**

**Membership discount for Spokes members  
www.eta.co.uk**

## SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT NEW TRANSPORT MINISTER

Lib Dem MSP **Tavish Scott** is the new Scottish transport minister, following the elevation of **Nicol Stephen** to Lib Dem leader.

It's a sad fact that cycling has so low priority in transport, health and environment policy that what gets done often depends on the Minister's personal commitment as much as on policy.



**Nicol Stephen** had impressed from the start, admitting "cycle projects have been under-resourced and under-promoted" [Spokes 86]. He noted our evidence that Public Transport Fund abolition meant **an end to large-scale cycle projects**, and said in Parliament that the new Integrated Transport Fund could be used instead [Spokes 89] - though he didn't officially notify councils! He saw that **Sustrans** cycle-route work was "high standard, on budget, and in tight timescales," and so increased their funding each year, and asked for an even more ambitious bid this year.

**The first big test for Tavish Scott is to approve the Sustrans bid - and to do so rapidly.** Our annual council survey [Spokes 89] shows that without this funding overall Scottish cycle project spending will fall badly.

Perhaps the biggest complaint of cycle officers is funding delay: "The timescale precluded other schemes of greater priority," "Late allocations limit complexity of projects and put great pressure on limited staff resources." It's crazy that this year's (05/06) Sustrans money is still not allocated. **Please ask your MSP to raise this with the new Minister.**

### LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

LibDems are consulting on their manifesto for the next Scottish election [send ideas to David Paterson 348 5818]. After the Edinburgh Lib Dems' tragic stand in the Transport Edinburgh referendum [Spokes 90], at odds with their party policy, we will see what the *actions* of the new Minister (above) tell us about Lib Dem policy. As Friends of the Earth asked "Can they be trusted on the environment?"

### SCOTTISH TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Transport policy is in drastic flux, leading to a *National Transport Strategy*, *National Transport Agency*, and new *Regional Transport Partnerships*. Spokes sent comments as below, using evidence from our annual councils survey [Spokes 89]. **Please raise our points with your MSP [ask us for our letter] and send your own ideas. The new structures could drastically affect cycle policy and levels of bike use.**

A new **funding mechanism** is essential to foster **very large-scale cycle projects** [say over £1m], which have ceased entirely following abolition of the Public Transport Fund [Spokes 89]. For small/medium projects the **CWSS scheme** could be revised so councils/partnerships commit matching funds, and tightened so that all councils do at least some cycle project work. **Sustrans** cyclerooute funding should be increased and announced in proper timescale [see above].

Second, as we so often say, the Executive must urgently research and tackle **declining rural bike use**. Contrary to normal perception, rural bike commuting used to be much higher than in cities - but falling rural use is negating the city growth [Spokes 85]. *It is scandalous that, despite being fully aware of the position, the Executive continues to allow rural bike use traditions to be squandered and destroyed, to the detriment of rural public health and the environment.*

Finally, **national cycle use targets** are vital, and we are concerned that Cycling Scotland suggests dropping them. They are essential, but must be linked to policy initiatives: for example, to ensure serious attention to the rural decline.

### SARAH BOYACK MSP

The Edinburgh Central MSP is surely a favourite of ours - if she is forgiven for yielding to the heavies and backing the M74 some years ago. Unlike most British politicians and officials she always thinks to link cycle policy into other topics. For example, in the latest tram newsletter [traveltime2 [www.tramtime.com](http://www.tramtime.com)] not once does the editorial mention bike access or carriage - but SB's column points out that tram/cycle integration is crucial, and "walking and cycling are vital for the accessibility and high quality environment that people now rightly expect" (this would be normal in Holland!) Unprompted by Spokes she also investigated government cycle project funding, and is organising climate change events with Spokes member **Mark Lazarowicz MP**.

*Sarah Boyack is keen to see a continued **Princes St cycle facility** once trams arrive [Spokes 88] and asks anyone with ideas or concerns on this to contact her [see p8 for contact].*

### PLANNING & TRANSPORT GUIDANCE

The Scottish Executive has issued two most important documents, both called **Planning for Transport** [free from 244 7543 or [www.scotland.gov.uk/planning](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/planning)]. One, **SPP17**, is policy on transport in preparing council plans and handling planning applications. Travel mode priorities should be walking first, then cycling, then public transport. Motor traffic is "flexible for the individual but ... impinges greatly on others' access and transport opportunities." The other document, **PAN75**, is concrete advice on putting policies into practice - many useful quotes for writing to councils.

### RAIL PRIORITIES CONSULTATION

With rail now controlled in Scotland, the Executive is consulting on priorities - e.g. integration with other modes, and achieving more for health, environment, social inclusion and the economy. See [www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations) or 0131.244.0855 for the document. **Closing date** to reply - 28 December. **Please copy your response to Spokes a.s.a.p.**

## STOPCLIMATECHAOS.ORG

**Tony Blair**, Prime Minister: "Climate change is a challenge so far-reaching in its impact and irreversible in its destructive power that it radically alters human existence."

**Prof James Curran**, Scottish Environment Protection Agency: "We have no idea of the consequences; we have lost control"

**Sunday Herald editorial** [22.8.04]: "How can Scottish Ministers preach carbon reductions at the same time as funding the M74 extension? ... Things we take for granted, like freedom to drive anywhere and take cheap flights, have to end. That may not be politically easy but is globally imperative."

**StopClimateChaos** is a coalition of 15 of the biggest UK charities, such as Oxfam, Sustrans, FOE and Christian Aid. A realization of links between environment/poverty has united these unlikely partners to force politicians face reality "Choices made in the next 5-10 years will determine the extent of devastation faced by future generations." [G 2.9.5]

**Please sign up at [www.stopclimatechaos.org](http://www.stopclimatechaos.org).**

Meanwhile the world's worst polluter, the US, is seeing widespread dissent at government climate policy. **Find out more, and give support, at [www.stopglobalwarming.org](http://www.stopglobalwarming.org).** An extract is in the new Spokesworker - ironically the **US insurance industry** was to meet in New Orleans to discuss climate change but, just then, hurricane Katrina struck!

**For more on climate change and transport** see Spokes 89.



## EDINBURGH COUNCIL

The big reaction to the police campaign means less space than usual here on cycle projects. But **please keep writing to your councillor** [and/or transport boss Cllr Andrew Burns] on issues concerning you, and on these 3 big campaigns...

☛ **Coloured surfacing** for cycle lanes & ASLs [Spokes 89]

☛ **Princes St cycle lanes** when trams appear [Spokes 88]

☛ **A high-quality-cycleroute project between Edinburgh and surrounding council areas** [Spokes 91,90].

At our summer public meeting **Cllr Burns** said officials have conflicting views on some issues, such as cycle-lane colour. **Many decisions are finely balanced and letters to councillors can help tip the balance.** Spokes even received a letter from an anonymous Planning officer, "**Just to let you guys know that comments ... are taken very seriously ... Keep the letters coming - they are not a waste of time!**"

A recent example is **Donaldson's School** redevelopment which is now to include a brilliant cycle link from Roseburn path to Magdala Crescent. Huge effort went in for 2 years by Spokes and Sustrans, but views in the Planning Dept were mixed. Letters to councillors from individual Spokes members almost certainly helped decide the final outcome.

### USHER HALL, LOTHIAN ROAD, EICC

A major refurbishment of the Usher Hall and area around is planned. For years we were told this includes a cycleroute connecting Grindlay St to Festival Sq, with a Lothian Rd toucan crossing, then on to EICC conference centre via The Exchange. For example, "**Festival Square has been designed to facilitate the cycleroute across the square. The Lothian Rd pedestrian/cycle crossing will link to Grindlay St. EICC is committed to cycle routes within its site.**" [18.2.97, Liam Fennell, EICC develop manager]. Yet the promised EICC route [Spokes 83,87] is still not marked. And now a consultation on the roads next to the Usher Hall has a plan which shows no cycle facilities whatsoever! **If these matters concern you, please write to** Director of Transport, 1 Cockburn St EH1 1ZL. Copy to Spokes, and ask your councillor to investigate.

### BABERTON - WESTER HAILES BRIDGE CLOSURE

The council wants to close this vital pedestrian/cycle link over the city bypass [Spokes map 7<sup>th</sup> edition, square E9], which connects 1000 facility-less houses to shops, health centre, cinema, etc, by foot and bike. The problem is some locals complaining about 'undesirables.' The answer *should* be to address security properly - one CCTV camera and proper upkeep of neglected vegetation is probably all that's needed. The formal objection date is past so **write to your councillor.**

### COUNCIL WALKING STRATEGY

The council seeks comments on its draft walking strategy by 2 December. If you'd like to comment, get a copy from Chris Day 469.3568. Copy your comments to Spokes.

### EDINBURGH AIRPORT

Giant expansion is planned: operator BAA hopes to grow passengers from 8m p.a. to 26m by 2030! - requiring a new 2-mile runway and a 5-fold rise in car parking. The council fears roads will be choked, and runoff from the runway and carpark a flood risk. However, the reckless contribution to climate change emissions is even more worrying, and many groups such as FOE and Green MSPs are pledged to fight the plans. **Write to your councillor and MSP if you agree.**

## ROYAL BALLS-UP OF SCOTLAND

Desperate to get RBS international HQ to Edinburgh, the council placed few transport conditions on the site at Gogar Park. As a result the appalling A8 cycleroute to Edinburgh and Newbridge was not rebuilt and the 80 cycle lockers were hugely oversubscribed [now rectified?] Unsurprisingly the bank had the foresight and found the money to build 1600 free car spaces! Many staff complained to Spokes...

"Isn't there a good, safe, well-lit route so that I can cycle?"

"I'm having to use Gogar Station Rd, hazardous in the dark"

"I didn't get a bike locker, so I'm using the bus"

"I would be grateful if my information is kept anonymous"

**This from a vast international organisation supposedly caring about its environmental impact, and a council targeting 10% bike commuting by 2010!** We urge readers, especially RBS clients, to write to RBS GogarPark Manager (and use any other contacts you have!) A decent route linking Gogar to Edinburgh and Newbridge is long overdue.

## LOTHIAN POLITICIANS

**Write to your area MSP or Lothians List (2<sup>nd</sup> vote) MSPs** at: Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP. 0131.348.5000.

**or email:** [firstname.secondname.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:firstname.secondname.msp@scottish.parliament.uk). For example, [Sarah.Boyack.MSP@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:Sarah.Boyack.MSP@scottish.parliament.uk)

### LABOUR

Sarah Boyack, Ed Central

Susan Deacon, Ed East

Malcolm Chisholm, Ed North

Mary Mulligan, Linlithgow

Bristow Muldoon, Livingston

Rhona Brankin, Midlothian

John Home Robertson, E Lothian

### CONSERVATIVE

David McLetchie, Pentlands

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, List

### LIBDEM

Mike Pringle, Ed South

Margaret Smith, Ed West

### GREEN

Robin Harper, List

Mark Ballard, List

**SNP** Fiona Hyslop, List

Kenny MacAskill, List

### INDEPENDENT

Margo MacDonald, List

**SSP** Colin Fox, List

**To find name/address/email of your Westminster MP...**

[www.parliament.uk/directories/directories.cfm](http://www.parliament.uk/directories/directories.cfm) 020.7219.3000.

**To find name/address/email of your local councillor...**

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk) 0131.529.3186

**Write to councillors at:** City Chambers, High St, EH1 1YJ.

**Email councillors as:** [firstname.surname@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:firstname.surname@edinburgh.gov.uk)

e.g. [Andrew.Burns@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Burns@edinburgh.gov.uk)

[www.eastlothian.gov.uk](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk) 01620.827827

[www.midlothian.gov.uk](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk) 0131.270.7500

[www.westlothian.gov.uk](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk) 01506.775000

**Europe:** [www.europe.org.uk/info/or\\_politics.guardian.co.uk/eu](http://www.europe.org.uk/info/or_politics.guardian.co.uk/eu)

**Sustrans:** Cllr Russell Imrie, c/o Midlothian Council [above]

## CYCLE FUNDING SURVEY

We have postponed the results of our annual survey till Spokes 93, as the Scottish Exec has not yet announced its 2006 Sustrans grant for cycleroute projects across Scotland. At £3.5m in 2004/5 this now has a major impact on overall cycle project expenditure [Spokes 89]. Moreover, previous transport Minister **Nicol Stephen** was so pleased with Sustrans's work that he asked for an even more ambitious bid this year. **See p7 for more, and how you can help!**

[Visit Sustrans office to see the 2005 project report: 0131 5398122]

**"I'm interested in joining SPOKES. Please send an application form, and recent issues of SPOKES"**

Post this to: SPOKES, St Martins Church, 232 Dalry Road, Edinburgh EH11 2JG.

**Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope [9"x4" if possible].**

**Please enter your name, address, postcode...**