

Spokes Action Update 05.09.14

... This is a circular to emailable Spokes members. If you recently sent us a change of email address it may not yet be in our database, so this message may go to your old address or possibly to both.

... When using email addresses below, replace AT by @.

1. 20MPH CONSULTATION – *please take part !!*

Edinburgh City Council is consulting on widespread 20mph implementation within the city, following the success of the South Edinburgh wide-area 20mph scheme. The City's plans are well ahead of most (all?) other UK cities as they include not only residential and shopping streets, but also other streets if used by significant numbers of pedestrians and/or cyclists.

However there is certain to be heavy opposition to some of the proposals. Therefore if you support the proposals - or want them extended further – it is really important to respond to the consultation – and if possible attend the public meetings and/or exhibitions.

Please read our website news item which gives extensive detail on the consultation, some of our own suggestions as to where the plans are under threat and where they could be strengthened, and the ways in which you can get involved.

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/2014/09/20mph-have-your-say-now/>

2. SPOKES AUTUMN PUBLIC MEETING – *put the date in your diary now!*

Our public meeting will be on Thursday 20 November at Augustine United Church in George IV Bridge, on the topic of **cycling developments in the Lothians** (including links between Edinburgh and the Lothians). We have the transport Convener or their Deputy from all 4 local councils to speak (for around 12 minutes) followed by an hour's QA and panel discussion. More details soon on our website. If any queries, please contact our meeting organiser, mknottenbelt1ATgmail.com.

We hope lots of members from the Lothians, as well as from Edinburgh, will attend to question councillors and see how the different Lothians councils compare in their level of ambition and achievement!! It's also an opportunity for Edinburgh residents to tell Lothians councillors what you do/don't like about cycling in and to the Lothians areas, and what improvements are needed.

3. PLANNING APPLICATIONS *to comment* & PAN EXHIBITIONS *to attend*

Check out our page of cycling-relevant planning proposals, to see if any affect areas where you live, work or otherwise cycle, and for information on how to look them up on the council website ...

Find the page at spokes.org.uk : documents : local : current-pas-and-pans

or click this link to go straight there...

www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/documents/members-campaigning/current-pas-and-pans/

One particularly interesting proposal is for **a new cyclerooute from Craighill Hill Crescent to the Western General Hospital**. The reference number is 14/03319/FUL. Our document above tells you how to look up the details on the council website. ***Closing date for comments – 15 September.***

4. GEORGE ST CYCLEROUTE OPENING Monday 8 September, 11am

The experimental revamped George St, including the Council's first segregated onstreet cycleroute, will be officially opened this Monday at 11am. The opening is outside Contini Restaurant, 103 George Street. Please come if you are free – it would be particularly good to have a few people of different ages & sexes, and in everyday clothes, to avoid the stereotypical 'cyclist' image beloved of the press.

Please note that although Spokes very much welcomes the new route, it was not our first choice, and there are some problems with it. These arise partly because the project (understandably) is aimed to benefit not just cyclists, but also walkers and local businesses and partly because the Council decided not to make any changes in Princes Street for the first year of tram operations.

For our view on the George Street plans, see our submission to the consultation... www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/1404-Spokes-comments-George-St-TRO.pdf.

There are more George Street documents here... www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/princes-st-city-centre/

Finally, we are pleased that the council has emphasised very strongly that this is a 1-year **experiment** – and they are willing to **modify the scheme during the course of the year** if problems arise or if there are useful changes which could be made as part of the experiment. Spokes welcomes feedback on your experience of using the route and any suggested modifications.

5. PHOTOS NEEDED OF NEW PATHS

If you are visiting the new **A90 path past Burnshot** and/or the new **path from Lasswade Road to the City Bypass underpass** (for Loanhead and Roslin) we would appreciate some photos for possible use in Spokes literature or website. We are looking for pictures which include one or more people on bikes (not just an empty path) and looking as ordinary as possible – the ideal would be 2 or more people of mixed sex and/or age and without helmets (or some with and some without).

6. BORDERS RAIL

a. Bike Capacity

Very disappointing news – it appears that the trains to be used on the new railway (opening in 2015) will be class 158 units with space for only 2 bikes.

www.bordertelegraph.com/news/borders/articles/2014/08/26/507465-on-your-bike-borders-railway-accused-of-missing-an-opportunity

If you wish to complain, please contact your MSPs and ask them to take this up. Find them at www.writetothem.com.

Of course, the ScotRail franchise is to be re-let next year www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/2014/06/scotlands-bike-rail-future/. The new operator should be announced fairly soon and it is just possible that a different operator might be able to do things differently if there was enough pressure via MSPs and others.

b. Routes to Stations in Midlothian & Borders – *volunteer(s) needed*

The Campaign for Borders Rail [CBR - www.campaignforbordersrail.org] has been lobbying to get maximum path access to stations from nearby communities, and has had one big success, getting a path connection agreed from Newtongrange station to the Scottish Mining Museum; but so far have failed in attempts to get a potentially valuable link from the south end of Gorebridge station to nearby housing.

CBR has a mass of other things to think about and would really appreciate **one or more volunteers to conduct a full audit of cycling/walking access opportunities** – how well do the seven stations connect to safe cycle and walking routes and local communities and attractions around them? What are the obvious gaps where new links, crossings etc should be provided? *If you are interested in doing or even organising this, alone or with others, or if you could do some of the stations* please contact Spokes and we will put you in touch with CBR and anyone else who may volunteer.

7. EDINBURGH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN [by 3 October]

The council is working on a LDP which will guide land use and development in the city, including land allocated for new housing developments. This will be a major document with big implications for future cycling opportunities – or not! A consultation is on for 6 weeks, 22 August – 3 October. The documents are here...

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20164/proposed_local_development_plan/1050/second_local_development_plan

The Council has also prepared a video and fixed up a series of drop-in sessions around the city, so people can find out more and make comments...

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20164/local_development_plan/633/timetable_and_engagement

The local area drop-ins are now over, but there is still one to come in the Planning Dept offices...

- **General city wide Session** 22 September, 4-7 pm - Urban Room, Waverley Court, East Market Street

Spokes would appreciate seeing your comments on the LDP, for possible inclusion in an official Spokes response.

8. FORTRESS WAVERLEY – *email your MSPs if you've not yet done so*

Several MSPs are taking up our concerns over Network Rail's Waverley Station cycling ban on the entry ramps - forcing bikes, pushchairs, luggage and large numbers of commuters and tourists onto the narrow footways whilst the wide adjacent roadway is vacant. The story has now also reached The Guardian – our website news item below includes a link to the Guardian story.

If you are affected, please do contact your MSPs – the more emails the better! It is very important that we keep up the pressure on this.

See our 4 July news item at spokes.org.uk or go direct to

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/2014/07/fortress-waverley/>

9. SPOKES STALLS

There will be a Spokes stall at Edinburgh Farmers' Market, Castle Terrace, on the morning of 27 September; and we also hope to be doing one or two stalls at University Freshers' events. There is also an open day, with Spokes stall, at St Martins Community Resource Centre, 232 Dalry Road [where we are based] on 27 September.

If you can help with any of these stalls, please contact martyn.edelsten@Ted.ac.uk.

10. ONSTREET BIKE STORAGE

As you probably know, Edinburgh Council is installing experimental onstreet overnight secure bike storage containers at a small number of locations. More on this here...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/residential-bike-storage/>

Under current plans there will be no more installations for 2 years, to analyse the existing experiment. Whilst we understand the value of experiments, this is too long when many people living in tenements etc are asking for this type of facility. One of the suppliers, CycleHoop, has produced free postcards that you can use to gather support from your neighbours, after which you could contact your local councillors and/or Cyclehoop to try and get an earlier installation. More info and a postcard supply from jonATcyclehoop.com. Their system is already far advanced in London – see www.cyclehoop.com/rentals

11. REGULAR VOLUNTEER – you?

We still need a 'regular' volunteer for the task below. This is really important to enable Spokes to function effectively...

The person who handles email to the spokes address is wanting a change, so we need someone to take over this important and responsible task. Obviously a handover and advice can be provided. If possible we need somebody who has been a member for a while and who expects to be able to do the job for some time. Ideally (but not essential) also willing to attend *either* Planning *or* Resources group (every 3/4/5 weeks), to be in good touch with spokes activities. The task involves passing on emails to the relevant person/group as appropriate, and also responding directly to some enquiries, ensuring that people contacting us are not left without a reply for longer than necessary – we may be able to prepare some model answers for common queries.

12. FINALLY ...

- Remember to check out our website every so often www.spokes.org.uk.
- We have an active twitter presence <https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian>. Please look every so often, and RT any tweets you support. The latest Spokes tweets now also appear on our website in the right-hand column.