

CYCLING DEVELOPMENT in the Lothians

This Spokes Bulletin supplement gives the three Lothians Councils a chance to tell readers about cycling infrastructure and other development in their areas. The material has been provided by the Councils – it was *not* written by Spokes.

All three councils have done some work to encourage everyday cycle use. West Lothian in particular was extremely successful in its Sustrans 2014/16 funding bids (see *Spokes* 119). None, however, has yet followed Edinburgh's groundbreaking example of allocating a set percentage of its transport budget to cycling (7% in 2014/15).

The Councils differ from Edinburgh in many ways, not least in population and available resources. Cycling conditions could be improved in many towns by complete 20mph coverage and appropriate infrastructure; there are fast 'A' roads lacking decent cycling facilities (*Spokes* 119, p6) while many minor rural roads need lower speed limits and a higher priority for cycling and walking – as with Clackmannanshire's cycle-friendly roads: <http://clacks.gov.uk/transport/friendlyroads>

You can take up these issues – each council page gives a contact, and you can also write to your local councillors at www.writetothem.com. We would appreciate a copy of your email and the reply.

The map on this page indicates the main cycle routes in the Lothians and those linking to Edinburgh. A more detailed version of the map will appear shortly on the Spokes website (as a downloadable pdf).

To cycle these routes on the ground, use the **Spokes maps** of *West Lothian & Livingston*, *Midlothian*, *East Lothian* and *Edinburgh* – available from bike and book shops, on-line or by post. www.spokes.org.uk/spokes-maps



Cycling improvements throughout East Lothian

East Lothian is more accessible by bike than ever, with improvements being made to cycle routes across the county.



This includes ongoing discussions about improvements and extensions to the Haddington and Pencaitland railway way paths and improvements planned for National Cycle Routes at Smeaton, which links up to the N1 route to Edinburgh, and Broxburn near Dunbar, which connects to the John Muir Way. This will include resurfacing of terrain and clearer sign-posting of cycle tracks.

An audit of cycle parking facilities within the main East Lothian towns is also ongoing, with the intention of providing additional cycle parking at a range of locations in the current financial year.

The historic John Muir Way provides a scenic cycle route through some of the most beautiful scenery in Scotland. This new, signed route follows the original John Muir Way via a braided route, allowing cyclists to travel with ease through the county.

For more information visit johnmuirway.org

East Lothian top of the class for cycling

East Lothian schools have been identified as amongst the very top in Scotland for promoting and supporting active travel for pupils on their journey to school. In the latest National Hands-Up Survey, East Lothian had almost 76% of its pupils travelling actively, which includes walking, cycling and scooting.

Dunbar Primary School is amongst the top schools in the UK for pupils travelling to school by bike, with 434 of the 782 pupils surveyed saying they cycled to school. The school has enormous bike sheds to store the pupils' bikes, and children cycle to school come rain or shine and have attracted praise from Cycling Scotland and Sustrans for their outstanding results.

Community-led efforts to improve road safety and promote active travel have resulted in a 20mph speed limit in residential areas near Dunbar Primary School, with similar plans made for roads in Cockenzie, North Berwick and Tranent, and the prohibition of vehicles around schools in Haddington and Dunbar at busy times.



Contact Ian Reid on ireid@eastlothian.gov.uk T: 01620827143 or search 'cycle routes' at www.eastlothian.gov.uk

Cycling in Midlothian

Midlothian currently has three existing cycle routes that cross into adjoining local authority areas, with planning permission for a fourth.

National Cycle Route 1 - Newcastle to Edinburgh (Coast and Castles Route) (25 km)

The Coast and Castles cycle route (NCR1) passes through Midlothian on quiet roads from the Borders via the Granites, northwards towards Middleton, Temple, Carrington and Bonnyrigg. At Bonnyrigg the route changes to mainly off road towards Dalkeith, via Dalkeith Campus. Continuing off road towards Whitecraig in East Lothian and continues onto Edinburgh.

National Cycle Network Route 196 - Penicuik to East Lothian Boundary via Dalkeith (16 Km)

A 16km, mostly off road cycleway that begins at Valleyfield in Penicuik and extends eastwards through Auchendinny, Roslin Glen, Rosewell, Bonnyrigg, Eskbank and Dalkeith.



Roslin Glen path

The route also connects to Haddington via the Pencaitland cycleway. Part of the former route from Hardengreen to Sheriffhall has been severed by the Borders Railway but an alternative route via Eskbank/Newbattle is almost complete.

Roslin to Straiton Pond (3.5Km)

In 2010 a 3.5 km off road cycleway that begins at Roslin and extends northwards via Loanhead to Straiton Pond at A720 City Bypass was completed. Following discussions with the City of Edinburgh Council and Sustrans an extension of the route to Lasswade Road has recently been completed. Midlothian Council is in the long term process of connecting the route to Penicuik with a mixture of on and off road cycle facilities.

It is hoped the City of Edinburgh will extend the route to Shawfair as this will provide an excellent commuter and leisure route that could provide the opportunity for a circular (mostly off road) cycling route to/from Edinburgh connecting this route to Route 196 via Penicuik, with Straiton Pond, Bilston Glen Viaduct, Roslin Chapel and Roslin Glen being some of the attractions along the route.

Roslin via Route 196 to Leadburn Cycleway (9 km)

Midlothian and Borders Councils combined with Sustrans to facilitate a feasibility/ design report for a cycleway between Roslin and Peebles. Planning permission was granted for the cycleway within both Planning Authorities and Midlothian is currently in discussion with a developer to construct a section of the route.

Future Connections to the Cycle Network

Midlothian Council is actively progressing with the connection of the communities of Mayfield, Newtongrange and Gorebridge to the local and National Cycle Network with some sections already complete and some sections due to be constructed in the next few years.

Cycle Tourism

In April Midlothian Council, Midlothian Tourism Forum and Visit Scotland held an "Increasing business from leisure cyclists" event to attract Midlothian businesses keen to welcome more visitors and customers who use bicycles.

A database of cafes, restaurants, visitor attractions and cycle shops/cycle engineers has now been established and will be on the Council's cycling web pages in the near future.

Recently Rosslyn Chapel and the National Mining Museum Scotland at Newtongrange became the first two Lothians visitor attractions to achieve the Visit Scotland Cyclists Welcome award.

For more information about cycling in Midlothian go to www.midlothian.gov.uk/cycling or contact

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West Lothian Council is committed to encouraging walking and cycling. Its commitment to active travel is supported in the Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2023. Over the years the Council, with partnership funding support from Sustrans (Scotland), has improved cycling provision throughout the district.



**West Lothian
Council**

RECENT PROJECTS

One of the Council's biggest successes so far has been constructing 12km of virtually traffic-free cyclepath along the A89 corridor. The final missing link between Boghall and Wester Inch was built last year.

On its way through West Lothian, this route provides a spinal east-west corridor connecting some of the most populated areas including Armadale, Bathgate, Livingston, Uphall and Broxburn. The cyclepath improves access to numerous schools, shopping facilities and employment sites. It is being well used by cyclists and walkers both for commuting to their workplace and for recreational purposes.

Other key projects have been:

- Access to Armadale Railway Station - linking Lower Bathville Armadale to the NCN75.
- Bathgate Station and Town Centre Access Improvements – including a bridge over the Bathgate Water eliminating the need to cross Whitburn Road twice within 100 yards.



- Nettlehill Road Railway Path in Livingston - connecting Broxburn and Uphall to Livingston, numerous employment sites, shopping facilities, Livingston North and Uphall Railway Stations, health care facilities and the local High School.
- Seafield to NCR 75 - upgrading an existing path to a bound surface significantly improving access to NCR75 and unlocking latent demand for cycling and walking on the existing network.

PLANS FOR 2014 - 2016

West Lothian Council, through discussions with communities and cycling groups, has identified new and improved key/strategic links needed to the existing cyclepath network. Armed with this information officers secured funding from the council's capital budget towards these projects and to provide the match funds necessary to win partnership funding from the Sustrans 2014-2016 Community Links Programme.

On 4 April 2014, West Lothian Council received from Sustrans an offer of over £1.8m match funding for ten of the fourteen applications submitted, comprising £755,000 in 2014/15 and £1,055,000 in 2015/16. As Spokes pointed out, West Lothian was the most successful Council in Scotland after Edinburgh and Fife, with its £1.8m win representing more than 7% of the total £24m available.

As a result, the following projects are in our Community Links Programme 2014 to 2016:

- Almondvale Park Regeneration and Environmental Improvements
- Linlithgow Academy & Sports Centre Links to Union Canal Towpath
- Starlaw West Roundabout to Boghall Roundabout - Cyclepath Provision
- B8084 Whitburn to Armadale – new Cyclepath
- Blackridge NCN75 Realignment / Station Access
- Livingston Network - Wheeling Ramps to Steps
- Bathgate Hills - Cycling/Walking Friendly Roads
- Polbeth to West Calder - Upgrade Cyclepath
- Golf Course Road & Braehead Park Links to Union Canal Linlithgow
- Broxburn Links to Union Canal Towpath

For further information on any of the above schemes please contact Ronnie Fisher on tel. no. 01506 282330, email: ronnie.fisher@westlothian.gov.uk.

You can also search for 'cycling' at westlothian.gov.uk