

Spokesworker is an occasional ("roughly monthly") news sheet, with stop-press news of forthcoming events, and of road, traffic and planning matters. It is not automatically sent to all members. A copy is enclosed if we are writing to you anyway, and copies are handed out at working group meetings. You can make sure to get a copy by sending us 10 or so stamped addressed envelopes. Spokesworker also appears on our Internet web site - to be notified of such updates by email, contact spokes@spokes.org.uk.

SPECIAL OFFER!!

Mar 19 Car Clubs conference [inc. bike-share workshop] Edinburgh.
First 2 Spokes members to book £25+vat, subsequently £50+vat,
[usual price much higher]. **To book:** Jen Taylor jen@ratransport.co.uk.
0161 368 6603. *Conference info:* www.ratransport.co.uk/carclubconf.html.

FOR YOUR DIARY

See Spokes 103 p2 for more events and for rides details...

From Mar 15 The Age of Stupid Climate Change film/meetings
Details and programme at www.takeoneaction.org.uk. Includes...

- Mar 15 – Premier, Vue Ocean Terminal
- Mar 20 – Week 1 release at Edinburgh and Glasgow FilmHouses
Edinburgh post-film discussions include (times are for the film itself)...
- Mar 20 5.45 Meet the film-makers; 8.20 Be a climate hero (WWF)
- Mar 21 1.00 Education; 5.45 Community; 8.20 Not Stupid Awards
- Mar 22 3.15 Faith; 5.45 Women; 8.20 Climate justice for world poor
- Mar 23 5.45 **Transport – including Spokes speaker Gary Bell**
- Mar 24 5.45 Climate & nature; 8.20 MSPs Question Time
- Mar 25 5.45 Direct action; 8.20 Climate change & the media
- Mar 26 5.45 Energy & climate; 8.20 Business & climate.

If the film is well attended it will continue into future weeks.

Mar 24 Southside Corridor Consultation Workshop

6.30-8, Southside Comm Centre, 117 Nicolson St [www.edinscc.org
– then click news]. Consultation covers area bounded by Meadows,
Holyrood Park, Salisbury Rd and Hill Pl/Nicolson Sq. **If you
live or work in the Southside please go if possible.**

The consultation is by **Ironside Farrar** consultants, who made
a fine job of forgetting about cycle access and travel when they
wrote the draft University Central Area plan for consultation a
year or so ago (in this area of very high bike use). **Make sure
they don't do the same this time!!** Another fear is that they will
be so concerned with appearance that they forget about living in
and using the area. If this affects the design of litter bins, that's
fine, but if it supports or calls for an end to coloured surfacing that
is serious! **We would like to see them recommend...**

- Full completion and re-instatement of coloured surfaces
on the 2 main N-S routes, Buccleuch St and South Clerk Street
- Install the long-promised **North Meadow Walk towards
Innocent railway cycle link**, especially a S.Clerk St crossing.
- Full support for existing **roadside bike parking**, and
installation of further 'Edinburgh-style' racks where needed.
- Good cycle links to the **university central area**.

**Mar 25 Spokes Spring Public Meeting – Bikes and Bus,
Rail & Tram.** See Spokes 103 or JackiehATwaitrose.com.

Apr 22 Climate Change Rally Scottish Parliament, 11am-
2pm. Details at www.stopclimatechaosscotland.org.

May 12-15 www.velo-city2009.com Conference, Brussels.

MIDLOTHIAN MAP

Work has begun on edition 3 of the Spokes Midlothian Map. The
current edition was published in 2002, so there are plenty recent
(and proposed) developments to include.

If you have corrections, or suggested improvements please
send them (with your contact details) to Tim Smith 554 7264,
tim@vizualz.co.uk. Tim hopes to have a working proof of the
new edition at the March 25 Spokes Public Meeting, so if you'd
like to see/discuss that please come early – doors open from 6.45.

Secondly, the Midlothian and W.Lothian maps are relatively
slow sellers. We welcome any bright (and practical!) ideas on
boosting sales – including any promotional schemes through
organisations, employers, schools, etc. This would allow us to
take advantage of a larger print run, and get the bulk of the maps
out before the content becomes too outdated.

GREEN MOTION

Green Councillor **Alison Johnstone** has told us of the following
motion which she is putting to the City Council Transport
Committee on 5th May. More info: Alison.Johnstone@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Please ask all your (3 or 4) councillors to support this motion
[Find them at www.edinburgh.gov.uk].

"SAFE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLING NETWORK"

"This Council believes it should adopt a long-term strategy of
gradually creating an infrastructure of truly safe pedestrian and
cycle routes both for schools and the general public;

- believes this would allow parents to feel confident that they can
let their children walk or ride to school on their own and arrive
safely and that adults are able to cycle without fear of traffic as
they can in so many other northern European cities as highlighted
in the current 'Dreams on Wheels' exhibition by the Danish
Cultural Institute at the Botanic;

- recognises the extreme seriousness of childhood obesity and the
dual challenge of climate change and peak oil, and believes that
Edinburgh could be more ambitious in its provision of safe cycle
and pedestrian routes;

- understands that a precedent exists in London where the London
Cycling Campaign established a potential network of cycle routes
through the city which was subsequently adopted by local
government as the London Cycle Network and which is gradually
being implemented;

- recognises that dedicated cycle lanes and pedestrian crossings
require funding. However, believes that given a long-term strategy
to establish a network of truly safe routes to schools linked into a
wider network across the city, the Council could gradually
implement this when upgrading roads and pavements;

- **and calls for a report on this concept and how best to
proceed, including drawing up a network of potential routes."**

CONSERVATIVE NEWS

**A remarkable and encouraging speech has been made by UK
Tory Transport Shadow Secretary Theresa Villiers – featured
as the page 1 lead in Local Transport Today, the transport
professionals' magazine.** Please note that Scottish Conservative
views at Holyrood are very different - still back in the C20th - but
this speech gives us a good basis to lobby *all* the Scottish parties.
Parties are starting to think about their next Holyrood election
manifestos and the UK general election expected in the next 12
months or so - and they need to see this as the ground to fight on!

We will print most of the LTT article in the next Spokesworker,
as there isn't space in this one. [We enclose the latest Spokesworker if
writing to you - e.g. with your renewal card when you renew. Otherwise,
we post it if you have sent us a supply of SAE's. Or, ask to be on our
email notification list, to let you know when it appears on our website].

Here is a taster of main points of interest about the speech...

- [If the Conservatives actually implemented these ideas!] the
change to transport project appraisal methods would almost
certainly result in many less road schemes, especially new roads,
and funding transfer instead to public transport/walk/cycle.

- Her proposed (English) Transport Innovation Fund [TIF] looks
very similar indeed to our Spokes Scottish Budget proposal
[www.spokes.org.uk – downloads – submissions – national – 0810 Budget]
for a cycle infrastructure fund - rejected by the Scottish
government. Although hers is much more ambitious as it also
explicitly covers public transport and walk as well as cycling.

- Her ideas differ from the **Scottish Conservatives** who don't
support any road spending reduction, or transfer from trunk roads
to cycling [Email from David McLetchie MSP to a Spokes member].

WORLD WIKI BIKE MAP

The Open Documents movement has come up with yet another almost bewilderingly amazing development, which you can find at www.openstreetmap.org - a "free editable map of the world." "You can view, edit and use geographical data in a collaborative way for anywhere on earth." Many uses of the map are already operational, with many data types added - including bike routes! As you'd expect, you can zoom from a worldwide perspective to country level, and right down to street level in many places.

To find the cycle version of the wiki map, click on the '+' at the top right of the map, then select **Cycle Map**. Many (all?) Sustrans routes are included, as are bike shops. As with wikipedia, doubtless coverage, accuracy and usefulness will continue to grow thanks to countless numbers of individuals. Of course, don't rely on it 100%, but overall it's a fantastic and growing resource.

SNIPPETS

STOP CLIMATE CHAOS SCOTLAND BRIEFINGS

This coalition of groups concerned over climate change has brought out a series of briefing papers covering the key issues and concerns over the Scottish Climate Change Bill. See them at www.stopclimatechaos.org/scotland. Also: www.onehundredmonths.org.

ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT BIKE UPGRADING?

We have been contacted by Alistair Campbell who runs a web development business and is looking for 'enthusiast' bike owners (the sort who are always looking to upgrade their bike) who will help test a sales website. The tests last roughly an hour, in Glasgow, and you are paid £20 [not sure if this includes travel]. For more info contact Alistair@web-energy.co.uk 0141 227 2162.

SCOTLAND'S GREEN CHAMPIONS NOMINATION

Go to www.ssdforum.org.uk then see *Green List*.

FIFE CYCLING CHARTER

Fife Council, already identified by Cycling Scotland as a top Scottish council for developing bike use (though on nothing like a European scale) has brought out the **Cycling Charter for Fife** - its "vision, objectives, policies and measures" for 2008-2103. There are also many useful background facts and figures. The document, backs up two of Spokes's main current concerns...

- **The importance of visible infrastructure:** "Cycle use has tended to increase where key infrastructure and facilities have been provided. This growth has been particularly encouraging because it is against a national trend of declining cycle use."
- **The threat of reduced funding due to Scottish government policy:** "Following the new single outcome agreements introduced by the Scottish Government, ring fenced funding has been largely removed. The level of funding shown, therefore, may not be as assured in the future." [Note that this is an official document, where the council will be reluctant to speak out too strongly, but the message is clear. The quotes from cycle officers in 3 other councils in Spokes 103 again give the same message].

If you live or work in Fife you can get a copy of the Charter from Susan.Keenlyside@fife.gov.uk 08451 555555 x 444442. It's not yet on their website, but ask if you'd like it there!!

CEC CYCLE FORUM

A few points from Edinburgh Council Cycle Forum 15.1.09...

- The draft **Cycling Strategy** is expected late Spring or Summer.
- **Routes between Kings Buildings and the central area** are being looked at, following a motion by Cllr Ian Perry. Send any comments to accessible.transport@edinburgh.gov.uk.
- **Projects due for completion this financial year** include... Rodney St tunnel; closure of Meadow Place; toucan crossings at Ferry Road and at Lanark Road West.
- **City Design Leader Riccardo Marioni** gave a presentation, and after discussion accepted that "cycling may have been a bit of a blind spot" in the Council Streetscape Initiative. We challenged him to find even one respect in which the Initiative - which of course deals with streets! - had helped raise bike use (in line with council targets and objectives). We also challenged him to come up with any convincing reason why Edinburgh had succeeded in

raising bike use over 10-15 years when it was declining in Scotland and UK as a whole, other than the widespread onroad coloured surfacing, seen every day by all road users, and making cycling feel legitimate, expected and safe.

PTWs IN BUS LANES

There is always controversy over whether powered two-wheelers should be allowed in bus lanes. Spokes member Mike Forrester (also a member of MAG, the Motorcycle Action Group) has sent us the viewpoint below, and to balance this we have included an item by CTC Campaigns Manager Roger Geffen. *There has also been debate on this in the Forum in the Spokes website, so if the topic interests you have a look at that, and post your comments.*

In Edinburgh the Council decided last year not to allow PTWs in bus lanes, so locally this is off the agenda for the time being - though it will doubtless come to the fore again at some point.

THE CASE IN FAVOUR

by **Steve Wykes**, MAG Scotland Regional Representative, and **Mike Forrester**, Spokes and MAG Member mikeATout.there.co.uk.

As a cyclist and motorcyclist I can sympathise with concerns about calls to allow motorcycles, scooters and mopeds to share access to bus lanes. After all we cyclists, as vulnerable road users, often feel threatened by other traffic which is almost invariably faster and heavier and often seems to be driven by drivers with little or no consideration for other road users.

Cycle access to bus lanes provides a welcome and appreciable reduction in risk compared to cycling in mixed traffic flows. On the face of it, to allow motorcycle access to bus lanes would seem to increase the risk. However, this is a somewhat simplistic, knee-jerk reaction, which does not think through the issues involved.

Motorcycle riders are also vulnerable road users, frequently at risk from the inattention and carelessness of other drivers. In around two thirds of all urban motorcycle accidents the other driver is to blame. Sound familiar? Motorcyclists have the same two-wheeled issues as cyclists with cobbled streets, wet diesel-spilled roundabouts, and the like. Even a low-speed falling off will hurt. We have much more in common than you think.

Certainly motorcycles are heavier and normally faster than cycles. But that is also true of the busses and taxis in bus lanes. Motorcyclists' manoeuvrability and awareness of our shared vulnerability means we are more likely to take adequate account of cyclists than some busses and taxis currently do.

But people have said that sharing bus lanes with motorcycles must surely be more risky? Well surprisingly, no. In every town and city where motorcycle access to bus lanes has been granted, there has not been any significant change in the numbers of collisions between motorcycles and cycles. Indeed in the recent TfL trials in London the safety of all vulnerable road users - pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists - improved by over 40%.

In all cases where PTWs have been granted access to bus lanes the decision has never been reversed on safety or other grounds.

Perhaps those who are so set against allowing motorcycle access to bus lanes should re-examine a few preconceived perceptions in the light of the evidence and recognise the benefits to all vulnerable road users that allowing motorcycles, scooters and mopeds shared access to bus lanes gives.

THE CASE AGAINST

This is an extract from the CTC magazine 'Cycle' December 2008 by Roger Geffen, Campaigns Manager. Their full position is in this factsheet: www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=4790.

"CTC members who ride motorbikes can't believe that, mile for mile, involvement of motorcycles in collisions with pedestrians and with cyclists is significantly higher than for cars - and more so for serious and fatal injuries. Yet that's what the statistics say.

This, and evidence that the average motorbike is more polluting than the average car, backs CTC's long-established policy to oppose motorbikes in bus lanes. It's one we share with Sustrans, Living Streets, RoadPeace and London Cycling Campaign - who collected a 3500-signature petition against Mayor Boris Johnson's plans to allow motorbikes into bus lanes on main roads.

CTC sides with motorcyclists on many issues where we have common ground. However the machines can present real hazards, and Boris's plans would doubtless bring a lot more onto London's roads, increasing pollution and undermining cycle use and safety."