

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.

HERALD NEWS STORY: CAPS and SPOKES

The Scottish Government has issued for consultation its long-delayed Cycling Action Plan (CAPS). The Plan contains many excellent ideas, and a hugely ambitious target of 10% of all journeys to be by bike by 2020. **But no money** - only a vague promise to consider money in the next Spending Review - which means no new money till 2011/2012 financial year (if then).

At the same time the Spokes annual survey [Spokes 104] shows Scottish cycling investment falling from a miserable 0.93% of the Scottish transport budget under the Lab/Lib government in 07/08 to just 0.81% under the SNP in 08/09 and, unless present policies/decisions change, to 0.66% in 09/10. Down from 422p per person in 07/08 to 355p in 08/09 and maybe 317p in 09/10. Compared to 5%-10% (£10-£20 per person) in bike-friendly European areas.

The Herald put these two stories together in an excellent article on 29 May. There's a live link to the story on the Spokes website [29 May news item]. Or - http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/news/display.var.2511081.0.cycling_groups_attack_freeze_on_annual_spending.php.

There are two main reasons why cycling investment is falling in Scotland, each resulting in a drop of about £2m.

First, a major cut in funding for **Sustrans**. Most of this money was transferred to the new *Smarter Choices Towns* project - an excellent scheme, but which covers public transport too, and should have been funded from other transport budgets, not by cutting the already very low amounts going to cycling.

Second, funds for the **Regional Transport Partnerships** set up by the Lab/Lib government, and which invested at a sensible level in cycling, were transferred by the SNP to councils. Sadly, most councils are investing far less of this in cycling than did the RTPs. The few honourable exceptions do include Edinburgh.

The Parliament's own all-party Transport Committee called for proper cycling investment [Spokes 103], as did a Herald editorial of May 6th. The Association of Directors of Public Health is calling for 10% of transport budgets to go to walk/cycle [Spokes 100].

The Scottish Government talks about emulating countries like Denmark, and the new target if achieved would be a massive step in that direction. The difference, however, is that whilst Denmark invests significantly and consistently over many years to achieve their targets, the Scottish Government is investing next to nothing, and even that is now falling. **In this context, the government is not setting a target for cycling, but a target for ridicule.**

TWO THINGS WE'D LIKE YOU TO DO...

Write to your MSPs - www.writetothem.com. Tell them that to achieve the government's new target, investment must start now and must be substantial - not a vague possibility of something unspecified in 2011/2012. Ask them what they will do about it? A European-style target requires European-style investment.

The Spokes proposal for the 2009/10 budget would be an ideal first step: a £20m fund open to bids over say £1m by any relevant organisation such as Sustrans, Councils or Transport Partnerships. It could be implemented rapidly, without new admin structures [Spokes 101], and government officials at the time agreed it was a workable idea. Or, for even quicker implementation, an immediate £5m top-up allocation to Sustrans - as the Lab/Lib government did when we revealed an impending fall in cycle investment.

Secondly, respond to the CAPS consultation - there are many good ideas in it, and a series of questions. Obviously highlight the critical important of European-style funding starting now - not vague ideas about 2011/2012. **The consultation ends 19 August.**

Find it here: www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/05/28093408/0

See also: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Transport/sustainable-transport

FOR YOUR DIARY

See also Diary on p2 of Spokes Bulletin 104

Jun 11-14 **Bike Film Festival** www.filmhousecinema.com

Mid Jun **The List Magazine** - special cycling issue planned

Jun 17 **Spokes Bike Breakfast** - see Spokes 104 p2

Jun 24 **Scottish Climate Change Bill lobby** see article.

JUNE 24 LOBBY

Message from Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

Subject: Last chance for a strong Scottish Climate Change Bill

Dear friends,

Thanks so much to all of you who have taken action on the Scottish Climate Change Bill so far. We have had great feedback from MSPs who have had thousands of e-mails and visits.

June is vital for our campaign. The Parliament is likely to make the final changes to the draft law on 24 and 25 June. We only have one month to make all the noise we can!

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland is organising a mass lobby of the Scottish Parliament on 24th June, 12 - 2.30pm. We aim to bring people from across Scotland to the parliament to speak directly to their MSPs in support of early, tough action on climate change.

We invite you, wherever you are in Scotland, to join us in the Parliament to lobby your MSP in a last push to get the best climate change legislation in the world.

Please **sign up now** [www.foe-scotland.org.uk/masslobby] to join us at this crucial event. We will provide you with a fact-sheet before the event and updates on the day with last minute news. And, if you need it, some help with travel costs is available on request.

TELL NO.10

If you've a spare minute, sign up to these petitions on the Prime Minister's petitions website: petitions.number10.gov.uk

poundsforpedals - Environmental Transport Assn petition, seeks a £100 bike trade-in grant to match the £2000 car-scrappage scheme, which is a subsidy from the taxpayer to car owners only. Another difference is that traded-in bikes would not be scrapped but shipped to low-income countries for refurbishment and re-use. NB - the Italian government has introduced a discount on new bike purchases. See 28 April article at www.bike-eu.com.

bikes-on-trains - the aim of this one is pretty obvious!

mobilemenaceban - by a RoadPeace member, seeking tougher treatment for drivers caught using mobile phones.

SMALL ADS *free in Spokesworker*

- Please sponsor **Rosie Telford**, member of Spokes Resources Group, for the Edinburgh-Crieff leg of a 26 June Lands End to JoG bike ride in aid of **Parkinson's Disease** research. Other riders who can commit to raising at least £200 are welcome. **Info:** pedalforparkinsons.co.uk www.justgiving.com/pedalforparkinsons2009

- Support a **3500 mile North Sea Cycle Route ride** in aid of **RNLI lifeboats**. Please donate or help build support through Facebook *Northseanonabike* or at www.northseanonabike.blogspot.com. Also supported by Edinburgh Bike Coop and Leith Cycle Co.

- **Low Carbon Holiday Travel** www.loco2travel.com.

PUBLIC HEALTH

The World Health Organisation European Office, which won a Velo-City 2009 award for work on cycling and health, has a new website on this topic... www.euro.who.int/physicalactivity.

EDINBURGH SNIPPETS

Charter of Brussels [see Spokes 104 p3]

The Charter, signed by Edinburgh at Velo-City conference 2009, includes a **15% target for trips by bike by year 2020**, 50% fatality reduction, and commitments in other areas such as bike parking, theft, commuting, tourism and consultation. See the full Charter at www.velo-city2009.com/charter-brussels.html.

Inverleith Area Consultation

Inverleith Nbd Partnership community conference: workshops, stalls, discussion groups – learn about and influence the future of Inverleith area. Fri 19 Jun, 1-4pm. Lunch; spaces limited; booking free but essential. **It could be really useful for local members to attend** and argue for better conditions for cycling/walking in the area. For more info or to book: Anne.brown@ea.edin.sch.ed 332.6316 www.edinburghnp.org.uk/page/Inverleith.aspx.

Hotel Missoni, George IV Bridge

Please consider complaining to councillors re the new **sticking-out pavement at Hotel Missoni, George IV Bridge**. Our traffic count shows 24.4% of rush hour vehicles from Forrest Rd are cyclists – they now get squeezed into the pavement at this point. A solution might be one traffic lane and a nice wide bike lane. Several members have already contacted the council, and one has received a reply suggesting they realise there is a problem.

Holyrood Park Traffic Ban?

Spokes member and cycle trainer David Gardiner [vantagecreative ATblueyonder.co.uk] has written to the Park authorities as follows. Why not contact them too, or your MSP, if you agree.

To: hs.rangers@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Are there any moves to ban traffic from the hill road via Dunsapie Loch at weekends? It's obvious that the current situation conflicts with reducing car use which I would have hoped was part of HS Policy.

Of the people driving up the hill road many do so at speed. This makes it unpleasant for the many runners and walkers and dangerous for cyclists to use. The road itself is only just wide enough for one car - it would of course make a nice wide bike lane which would be the case almost anywhere else! I counted over a dozen cars and one taxi in my 13 minute walk from St Margaret's Loch. There were maybe 20 walkers and runners and 5 cyclists.

For less mobile people the hill road could be kept open some weekdays - or perhaps there could be a minibus to drive people up carefully.

Benefits would be clean air, less noise, less fuel consumption, less wear on the paths from the car park to Arthur's Seat. Side benefits would be a clear message that the park is a park, not a car park.

Families could actually cycle and walk round the hill road in peace etc. This is exactly what is needed to improve fitness and cut pollution.

The Waterfront Promenade

Council news item: "The first phase of Edinburgh's Waterfront Promenade, between Silverknowes and Granton, is now complete. The next section, Granton to Granton Harbour, is being designed, with work expected to begin this summer. The Promenade will form a continuous walkway/cycleway for 16.8km from Joppa to Cramond, and will become part of the North Sea Trail and North Sea Cycle Route as well as the Scottish Coastal Path. The project will rejuvenate the waterfront, and utilise coastal areas which have been dormant. The Promenade will also increase the attractiveness of coastal areas and provide a unique facility, with fantastic views, that walkers, runners and cyclists can enjoy." Please tell Spokes what you think of the first phase.

St Mark's Park Path

Note by Tim Smith who has lobbied on this for several years, "Now that the very useful route from Warriston Rd through the park to Macdonald Rd is open again, via the replacement foot/cycle bridge, the even better news is that the council has installed locked gates and bollards at Warriston Road access to prevent commuter parking – there used to be up to 20 cars on the path."

The Meadows

Friends of the Meadows, to which Spokes is affiliated, is seeking restrictions on the weeks-long commercial events which cause severe grass damage. More info and how to help: www.fombl.org.uk

Spokes May traffic count

See our website news item and the link from there - some good results, and encouraging 3-year trends.

CONSULTATIONS

To keep up with current consultations...

Scottish Government – Go to www.scotland.gov.uk then click on consultations. You can also sign up there for weekly email notifications of forthcoming and closing consultations.

Edinburgh Council – go to www.edinburgh.gov.uk then click on consultations. There isn't an email notification system.

OPEN SPACE CONSULT

Edinburgh Council is preparing an open space strategy for the next five years, together with 12 action plans, one for each neighbourhood partnership area. As a first stage the Council has drawn up a 'draft audit' [maps+info] of all(?) significant open spaces.

The draft open space audit is available in libraries and online at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/openspacestrategy. Paper copies can be bought at Planning Reception, Waverley Court, 4 East Market St.

We hope to send a copy of the questionnaire to all members in our June 6th mailing. Please complete and return it to the council – or fill in the online version at the above website. Closing date for all comments – July 10th - DO IT NOW!!

The consultation is not just about formal parks. Indeed, the Council says, "We especially want to know about spaces other than parks, like green corridors or housing amenity areas." So your comments about disused rail corridors, or other open spaces which you cycle through or beside are really valuable.

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

A separate questionnaire for children and young people is available. Contact the council if interested.

PUBLIC STALLS AND WORKSHOPS [all in June]

There are also **Saturday stalls and weekday evening workshops** – please go to any in your local area.

Sun 7, afternoon	Meadows Festival , The Meadows
Sat 13, 11–6	Leith Festival Gala Day , Leith Links
Sat 13, 12:30–4	Kirkliston Gala , Allison Park, Kirkliston
Sun 14, 12–4	Do the Burn , Burdiehse Burn, Gilmerton Dykes Rd
Sat 27, 10–5	Canal Festival , Edinburgh Quay, Fountainbridge
Evening workshops : book if possible so they can order tea/coffee.	
Mon 8, 6:30–8	Stockbridge Library , 11 Hamilton Place
Tue 9, 6:30–8	Piershill Library , 30 Piersfield Terrace
Thu 11, 6:30–8	Telford College , 350 West Granton Road
Mon 15, 6:30–8	The Faith Mission , Govan Hse, 548 Gilmerton Rd
Tue 16, 6:30–8	Leith Academy , 20 Academy Park
Wed 17, 6:30–8	Wester Hailes Education Centre , 5 Murrayburn Dr
Thu 18, 7:00–8:30	Currie Primary School , Currie
Tue 23, 6:30–8	Kirkliston Comm Ctr , 16 Queensferry Rd, Kirk'n
Wed 24, 6:30–8	East Craigs Church Centre , 11 Bughtlin Market
Thu 25, 6:30–8	Gillis Centre , 100 Strathearn Road
Tue 30, 6:30–8	St Columba's by the Castle , 14 Johnston Terrace

CONTACTS FOR RESPONSES AND ALL QUERIES...

0131 469 3411 email: openspacestrategy@edinburgh.gov.uk
Officer in charge: Ben Wilson, Principal Planner

GOVT CONSULTNS

Some important consultations are now underway. Please consider sending in your comments – this can be done online or on paper.

CAPS CYCLING ACTION PLAN – ends 19 August

See main article for details and where to find the draft plan.

SCOTTISH PLANNING POLICY – ends 24 June

The government is replacing 20 or so policy guidance documents by this one consolidated document - covering transport, economic development, town centres, retailing, housing, open space, physical activity, and more. **The document is critical to better conditions for cycling/walking for everyday journeys, as councils and others are expected to follow its guidelines when developing local plans, considering planning applications, etc.**

We've not looked in detail, but there are certainly good points in the transport section - though they may need strengthened, along with more integration of active travel in other sections.

Find the draft document at www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/planning or www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations. Please make your own response, and let us know of any improvements you think are needed.