

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 spokesATspokes.org.uk.

BUDGET 2012-13

The Scottish draft budget *now open for consultation* is extremely bad for walking and cycling investment. For the story so far, see Spokes Bulletin 111 and recent news items at www.spokes.org.uk.

Rational argument by itself is often not enough to win a case against a majority government. So the manifesto on which the SNP was elected this May is very useful [see Bulletin 111] - the draft budget completely contradicts it. Hopefully SNP MSPs will be pushed into action by being reminded of their manifesto, whilst other parties can use the promise to embarrass the government.

Thank you to the many Spokes members who have already contacted MSPs. We've also generated a good level of **twitter activity**, with tweets about our Scottish budget campaign from respected sites in Denmark (@copenhagenize) and Netherlands (@DavidHembrow) plus the new UK @GBCycleEmbassy. We've also noticed individuals tweeting their dismay to SNP HQ.

Several MSPs, including some SNP, have now promised to raise with Ministers the position of active travel in the budget. There are rumours that the weight of emails/letters is causing at least some thinking behind the scenes in government.

The budget process continues in Nov/Dec, with a probable final January vote. **Please write now if you've not yet - the sooner you write the more likely you are to have an effect.** Please send us useful replies so we can include relevant points on our website.



Spokes members leaflet 200 delegates about the budget as they arrive at the Sustainable Scotland Network conference where the Climate Change Minister was speaking

An interesting sign is that central Edinburgh MSP **Marco Biagi**, (SNP) who initially sent constituents a very unsatisfactory reply blaming councils [see below] now seems to have got the point about the promise in the SNP manifesto. He has just asked this Parliamentary Question ... **S4W-03871 Marco Biagi:**

"To ask the Scottish Executive how much it will spend on active and sustainable travel, as referred to in the 2011 SNP manifesto, in each year from 2011-12 to 2014-15 and what proportion this represents of (a) overall transport spend, (b) transport spend excluding the Forth Replacement Crossing and (c) overall spend as laid out in the Scottish Spending Review 2011 and Draft Budget 2012-13."

He's hedging his bets by asking for 3 different %s, but it's good that he is now trying to get nearer to the truth. The SNP manifesto promise is clearly based on his point (a). There are some complex factors [1-3 opposite] which his question may not unravel - but the fact that his question mentions the SNP manifesto is very helpful.

SNP MSP REPLIES

The first SNP reply copied to us was from **Marco Biagi**. His main argument was that most decisions on cycling investment are for councils, not government - implying it is up to them to find all the money. We certainly agree it is for councils to decide *which* routes are needed, but that doesn't answer the funding question.

It is the Scottish government which has...

- set a target for 10% of trips to be by bike by 2020
- included this target as a 'milestone' in its RPP plan to reduce Scotland's carbon emissions
- included this target in its national strategy to combat obesity.

It is completely unreasonable for government to set a target, particularly such an ambitious one, and then cut funding and expect councils to pay whatever is needed to meet the target.

More recently SNP MSP **Jim Eadie** has been replying. He tries to make the best of it, but his case is weak - the funds he mentions are one-off schemes, thus demonstrating the absence of a realistic funded programme to meet the government's own 10% target. And he ends by agreeing there are *'legitimate concerns about the amount of money set aside for active travel in the budget and spending review.'* **He has written to John Swinney, the Cabinet Finance Secretary, urging him to find extra resources.**

Please help Spokes, other cyclists and yourself by contacting your MSPs if you've not yet done so. www.writetothem.com. Remember to mention the SNP election manifesto promise.

CALCULATION COMPLICATIONS [for nerds only!]

[1] One of the 2 main sources of active travel funding is the **Sustainable and Active Travel budget line (SAT)**. The draft budget cuts this from £25m [11/12] to £16m [12/13]. This covers active travel (including for Sustrans work with councils etc) BUT it also covers other areas such as some park-and-ride sites, some public transport, low carbon vehicles, etc. The budget doesn't say how much of SAT goes to active travel - we only discover that as the year passes. It would be far clearer to have a separate budget line for active travel alone - Spokes has pressed for this, but it might then be too easy for the public to see what is happening! So - if the answer to Marco Biagi's PQ refers to the SAT budget line alone, we'll not have a true answer for walking and cycling.

[2] The other main source of active travel funds is the **Cycling, Walking, Safer Streets fund (CWSS)** - distributed to all Scottish councils based on their population. CWSS however is not in the transport budget, but comes out of the government's funding to councils - which is why its future is left open in the budget - it is to be discussed and agreed between the government and COSLA (representing councils) probably in December. Not being in the transport budget, will it even appear in the answer to MB's PQ? CWSS is vital in assessing total active travel investment, yet we don't know whether it will be cut or even abolished entirely - as the SNP tried unsuccessfully to do in the previous parliament.

[3] The government has announced a new fund, the **Future Transport Fund**, which will include some money for walk/cycle. It is likely to be very little in 12/13, but is set to rise towards the end of the Parliament (i.e. towards next election year). There is no indication at all as to how much of this fund will go to active travel - it could be a trivial amount, or it could even become comparable to the sums from the present [1] and [2] above.

NOV 17 PUBLIC MTG

Come to hear the progress on Edinburgh's Active Travel Action Plan, and comparisons with Oxford's similar but much more longstanding policies. A good turnout is important to impress councillors with the level of interest and concern.

Speakers: Cllr **Gordon Mackenzie**, Edinburgh Transport convener and **Richard Mann** of Cyclox, Oxford Cycle Campaign.

6.45pm for 7.30, Augustine United Church, George IV Bridge

More info: see Nov 4 news item at www.spokes.org.uk.

Special Features...

- ◆ There'll be Celebration choirs [unfortunately not yet budget-related!]
- ◆ We hope to take orders for the Spokes Mapp Buff [see overleaf]

ONSTREET STORAGE overnight pilot scheme

Edinburgh Council has unveiled its pilot scheme for overnight bike storage in areas where bikes cannot be stored indoors.

If interested for your area, apply by 9 December

Applications should ideally involve a group of residents or a community organisation willing to help look after the facility.

As an outcome of the Council's *Active Travel Action Plan* and the *Spokes Domestic Bike Storage project*, the council is inviting applications from residents in areas where the only realistic option for adequate overnight bike parking is onstreet – i.e. in many of Edinburgh's tenemental and/or heavily flatted areas.

The Council says "The City of Edinburgh Council is committed to increasing the percentage of all journeys in the city by bike to 10% by 2020. One of the biggest barriers to cycling in the city is a lack of suitable cycle parking for residents in tenement areas.

In recognition of this, the Council is considering on-street cycle parking in areas of tenements. This will initially be done on a trial basis at a small number of locations. We are planning to trial... covered cycle racks; individual lockers; and uncovered racks."

If interested for your tenement/flat area ... please talk to your neighbours and apply by 9 December. The application form is available from www.spokes.org.uk [see 26 October news item]. For more information – email cycling@edinburgh.gov.uk.

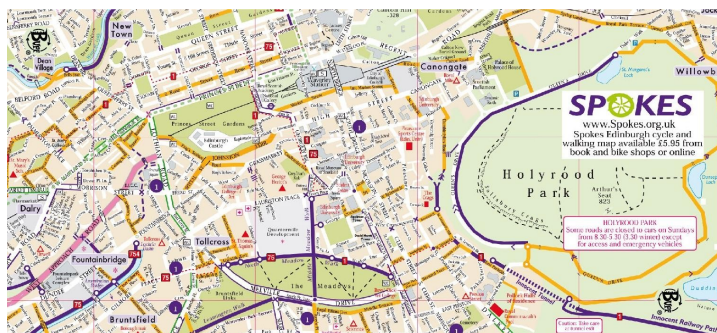
If there's space in your tenement or its grounds you may not qualify ... but if so remember the Spokes factsheet *How to be a Cycling Flat-Dweller* downloadable from www.spokes.org.uk : documents : advice : bike storage. Printed copies also available.

SPOKES BUFF

We're planning to sell a fantastic new MAPP BUFF. Don't order yet; it's not here at the present time but will hopefully be here by present time. This will be an Original Buff [not a replica] which we hope to sell for £10 (post free). And it will feature the *Spokes Edinburgh Cycle Map* – how cool can you get!? We hope to have a sample and take orders at our public meeting on 17 November [see over for meeting details].



Andy Hunter of www.storybikes.co.uk models the Spokes Mapp Buff. See online for colour picture at www.spokes.org.uk : spokesworker



The Spokes Mapp Buff map

CONSULTATION

Edinburgh Local Development Plan comment by 27 Jan 2012

The plan will cover land-use and development policies and proposals for the next few years (including many transport issues) and provides the basis for deciding planning applications. It will replace the current Edinburgh Local Plan.

The Main Issues Report, now out, is the opportunity to suggest and comment on options for the final plan. For more info and how to comment see www.edinburgh.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan.

There are also exhibitions as follows [all 11am-3pm]

Sat 19 Nov	Morrison Shopping Ctr (Gilmerton)		
Wed 23 Nov	Royal Infirmary		
Sat 26 Nov	Morrison's Supmkt (Hunters Tryst)		
Thu 1 Dec	Telford College	Sat 3 Dec	Princes Mall
Sat 7 Jan	Ocean Terminal	Sat 14 Jan	St James Centre

BIKE – RAIL

For more detail see Nov 7 posting at www.spokes.org.uk.

EGIP Edinburgh-Glasgow Improvement Programme

This massive main line electrification project (including Alloa, Dunblane and new sections of railway) will bring many benefits but bike carriage is a big worry. Currently there are an excellent 4-8 official bike spaces every 15 minutes on the Edinburgh-Glasgow main line, making bike-rail a true door-to-door service for meetings at journey's end. But we are getting mixed messages as to what the new electric rolling stock will provide.

If future Edinburgh-Glasgow bike space concerns you **please comment** at www.networkrail.co.uk/egip and **also** ask your MSPs to raise it with Transport Scotland. Send us any useful replies.

You might wish to quote the [Scottish] *National Transport Strategy*, which states [para 164] ... "We aim to further increase funding for cycling and walking ... and will place more emphasis on the promotion of them as sustainable forms of transport ... focusing on ... and carriage of bicycles on public transport."

Spokes argues that every train in Scotland should have a flexible space in every carriage – catering for bikes, pushchairs, bulky luggage and wheelchairs. This will also matter hugely for new trains on the Borders Railway Project [article in Spokes 109].

Apart from bike carriage, EGIP concerns us in other ways you may wish to comment on – see our submission, linked from the above website posting. **Comments close 30 November.**

ScotRail Franchise

The ScotRail franchise runs to Nov 2014, but consultation by Transport Scotland (the Scottish Government's transport agency) on the terms of its renewal is expected to start this month. This is our best opportunity to press for improved cycle-carriage on Scotrail, as well as better bike parking, bike hubs, improved station accesses/connections, and so on. Any successes we have will affect the entire ScotRail network for years to come.

The franchise winner must operate Scotland's rail service to the franchise specification, so we must persuade Transport Scotland to make it more bike friendly than the present one. We have prepared a draft submission [see above website posting]. **Please send your thoughts on our draft** to ewanATnavyblue.org.uk.

Dornoch Rail Link Action Group [Dorlag]

If you live or travel with a bike in the north: Dorlag is into a new burst of activity and asks us to publicise their online survey. It's the second main item on their website www.dorlag.co.uk.

SNIPPETS

CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS IN DURBAN

Daily blog and video updates from the international talks starting 29 Nov ... www.stopclimatechaos.org/scs-durban-2011.

RSPB CONSERVATION POLICY OFFICER by 21 Nov

Seeks someone interested in climate change and energy to join our policy team for 9 months - to ensure renewables are delivered in the right places to meet Scotland's climate change and renewables targets, and help fight climate-damaging proposals.

www.rspb.org.uk/vacancies/details/293970-conservation-policy-officer.