

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.

Jan 11: BUDGET DEMO

[For further information see news articles at www.spokes.org.uk]

Unless the draft SNP budget is amended, cuts in walking/cycling investment look to be **even worse than Spokes predicted**, with only the equivalent of some 67 pence of every £100 transport spending likely to go to active travel [see explanation below].

WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- **Contact your MSPs urgently if you've not done so, or if you're unhappy with their answer.** Discussions are still ongoing on the final version of the budget, and it will then have to be voted on in Parliament. *For our thoughts on the responses from SNP MSPs see the Nov 28 news item at www.spokes.org.uk.*

- **Come to the protest at 1pm on Wednesday 11 January at St Andrews House, Regent Road** – the offices of First Minister **Alex Salmond MSP** and Finance Secretary **John Swinney MSP**. John Swinney has been invited to come out and receive a letter about active travel funding. Organised by **Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, Transform Scotland, FOE, WWF**, and with **Spokes** support, *already over 200 people have said they'll be there!!*

For more information see www.stopclimatechaos.org/on-ver-bike. **If you intend to come**, sign up on facebook [link at above webpage] or email gailATstopclimatechaosscotland.org [replace AT with @].

To wear a Spokes tabard, and help provide an obvious Spokes presence, please come 10 mins early and see Judy Cantley. Please also return the tabard to Judy at the end of the event.



The 2008 Spokes budget demo at Scottish Parliament. Then we were merely arguing for cycle funding to be raised to a realistic level, in line with government cycle-use targets. This time we have to argue against savage cuts, alongside a huge rise in trunk road funding, and we expect many more people. NB - remember the protest is at St Andrews House, not at the Scottish Parliament. [photo: Chris Hill]

WHY IT'S EVEN WORSE THAN WE PREDICTED

Cycling investment in the budget is not specified separately, nor even is active travel. Instead active travel forms part of 3 separate multi-purpose budget lines – CWSS, SAT and FTF. This causes great confusion [deliberately?] including even for ordinary MSPs [see Dec 15 news at www.spokes.org.uk]. **Thanks to questions to MSPs by people like you the 2012/13 detail is now getting clearer.**

The very worst scenario, scrapping CWSS, hasn't happened, but CWSS has been cut by 20%. The new FTF we now know has to fund several areas of sustainable transport and is anyway small in 2012/13. Biggest problem is the SAT budget line: not only is it cut from £25m to £16, but it now transpires that the amount of the SAT budget line going to walking/cycling is to be cut drastically (from ~£9m in 11/12 to, optimistically, at best ~£3.5m in 12/13).

For more explanation/calculation see *Spokes update briefing to MSPs* [linked from www.spokes.org.uk, Jan 2 news item] - the update also includes a response to an extremely unconvincing letter to MSPs from Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure **Alex Neil MSP**.

In total, instead of the 20% cut to active travel which we had predicted for 2012/13, the draft budget now looks likely to mean a 32% cut (following an 18% cut this year). **Thus walk/cycle investment in 2012/13 will be little more than half its level in 2010/11** – and that was miserable enough! From a mere 1.21% of total transport in 2010/11 it falls to 1.03% this year, and is set to plummet to 0.67% in 2012/13 if the draft budget is not changed.

- **Maybe we could understand it if total transport spending was plummeting.** But no! – it is shooting up, thanks to a £100m boost to trunk road spending – an *increase* which is 8 times the total likely investment in walking and cycling in 2012/13.

- **Maybe we could understand it if the SNP had promised to cut walking and cycling.** But no! – their 2011 Holyrood manifesto promised to “increase the proportion of transport spending on ... active and sustainable travel.”

- **Maybe we could understand it if our arguments were shown to be wrong.** But no! - **our budget submission was complimented** [www.spokes.org.uk news Dec15] by the all-party MSP Committee who scrutinise transport issues, who said in reporting on the draft budget, “The Committee notes that the best estimate of active travel funding is by Spokes” and “recommends that the Scottish Government should consider setting the active travel budget as a proportion of total transport spending.”



FOR YOUR DIARY

Jan 7 Edin Local Developt Plan exhibition: Ocean Terminal, 11-3.

Jan 10 EGIP* public meeting 7pm, Calton Centre. Meeting may focus on possible Abbeyhill station but other points can be raised.

Jan 11 Scottish Budget protest 1-2pm. See main article.

Jan 11 EGIP* public meeting 7pm, Queensferry High School.

Jan 14 Edin Local Developt Plan exhibition: St James Centre, 11-3

Jan 16 Drop-in Q&A re community bike project grants: see Snippets

Jan 18 Edin Local Developt Plan Thomas Morton Hall, 28 Ferry Rd Exhibition 4.30-5, workshop 5-7.30 [mainly re Docks area]. Must book for workshop: 529.3500 localdevelopmentplan@edinburgh.gov.uk.

*EGIP = Edinburgh/Glasgow rail electrification project. For more info about the project see Nov 7 news item at www.spokes.org.uk. **It would be very valuable for people to raise bike carriage etc at these meetings** – see our EGIP comments in Nov 7 news item.

CONSULTATIONS

There are several consultations on in January. Please try to respond to at least one that particularly concerns you.

Edinburgh Local Development Plan ends 27 Jan

ELDP will replace the Edinburgh Local Plan. It covers land-use and development policies for the next few years including many transport issues and will be used in planning application decisions.

The *Main Issues Report*, now out, is the chance to comment on options for the final plan. For more info and how to comment, including an online QA, see www.edinburgh.gov.uk/localdevelopmentplan. *There are also exhibitions & a workshop* – see 'For Your Diary'

ScotRail Franchise ends 20 Feb

The ScotRail franchise runs to Nov 2014. Consultation by Transport Scotland (the Scottish Government's transport agency) on the terms of its renewal is now underway. **This is our best chance for improved Scotrail bike-carriage, parking, bike hubs, station accesses/connections, etc.** Our successes will affect the ScotRail network for years, so we must persuade Transport Scotland to make the new specification truly bike friendly.

To comment click on *Rail 2014* at www.transportscotland.gov.uk. We have prepared a draft Spokes submission [linked in Nov 7 news item at www.spokes.org.uk] - this may help with your own comments. Please copy us your response, and/or send us views on the spokes draft ... email our bike/rail person ewanATnavyblue.org.uk.

City Centre - Southern Arc ADF ends 23 Jan

[notes by Richard Grant who is coordinating our response]

Edinburgh Council is consulting on a draft Area Development Framework [ADF] for the "Southern Arc" - essentially south of Princes St but north of the Meadows and from Haymarket in the west to Holyrood in the east. This ADF is intended to guide actions and investment by the Council itself and how the Planning Department responds to other development proposals.

SPOKES has been involved in earlier discussions on the ADF and this consultation draft is very clear on the importance of walking and cycling and the need for improvements, because of the direct and indirect health benefits and the contribution walking & cycling can make to improving the local environment.

The draft ADF highlights the 5 project areas below. Proposed actions for each area are summarised in a 'Next Steps' section..

- **Haymarket-Holyrood cycle/pedestrian route**
- improvements in **Haymarket area**
- controls on **Chambers St** motor traffic
- further **Royal Mile** improvements
- 'temporary measures' (including **better cycle parking**).

All the proposed projects are significant, but the **Haymarket to Holyrood cycle route** is probably the most important for us - linked to improvements in Haymarket area [not easy, particularly given the forthcoming new tramlines]. The route is also mentioned in the Council's Active Travel Action Plan (ATAP) though there is little detail on it in ATAP - or in the draft ADF.

SPOKES will respond to this consultation, but we also urge members, especially if you live in or use the area, to respond as individuals. **The draft has suffered press criticism for being too pro-cycling/walking, so if you support its positive emphasis on promoting cycling, please say so.** Also, put forward any specific suggestions you have and any concerns. **In particular, check out the 'Next Steps' section:** we fear the proposed actions don't match up sufficiently to the aspirations earlier in the report, such as action on the proposed Haymarket-Holyrood route.

Implementation of the improvements and aspirations in the ADF will be very challenging and it is essential that this is done with ambition and commitment. There is a worry that an "anything is better than nothing" approach may happen with ATAP (for example, colour only on some sections of cycle lane) and there are similar risks/fears over ADF implementation.

CONSULTATION DETAILS

Go to edinburgh.gov.uk and search for 'southern arc' or click on... www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/207/planning-policies/1059/area_development_frameworks/3.

Email your response to andrew.sikes@edinburgh.gov.uk by Jan 23, and copy to Richard Grant [richardanthonygrant@gmail.com].

MARKET STREET

Early in 2011 we were told at the Council Cycle Forum that the 2010/11 cycle budget included a Market Street uphill cycle lane. Now the council is considering re-instating car parking instead (in a costly project involving pavement narrowing!) - yet there are already some 700 car spaces in the area. This steep uphill made very unpleasant cycling with parked cars in the old days; surely a council with an ambitious bike-use target would not revert to that! If this concerns you, write to your councillors [www.writetothem.com].

STOLEN

Spokes member Caroline Barr, who has disabilities linked to cerebral palsy, has had her mobility trike stolen. Please pass any info to the police on 311.3131 or Crimestoppers 0800-555111. More details and a picture at... www.scotsman.com/edinburgh-evening-news/charity_worker_in_appeal_for_return_of_stolen_mobility_trike_1_1991737.

Spokes/CTC activist Peter Hawkins had his 'round town' bike stolen on 22 December near Saughton allotments on the Water of Leith path.

Details: grey 23" tourer; 12-speed 2x6 derailleur

Make: Coventry Eagle (might be British Eagle)

Distinctive features: Post-coded EH11 3HU; Light tan Brooks leather saddle; frame around bottom bracket has been roughly re-painted; Brake cables opposite to normal - left cable operates front brake.

There's a £60 reward for info leading to recovery: Please contact peterhawkATphonecoop.coop 443 6712.



SNIPPETS

HOW BRITAIN HAS FAILED CYCLING

www.cyclingweekly.co.uk/news/blog/531312/how-britain-has-failed-cycling.html

PRINCES STREET HOPE???

www.heraldscotland.com/news/transport/council-reveals-plans-for-princes-street-makeover.16296981

www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/2011/12/princes-street-paradise/

MONEY FOR LOCAL BIKE PROJECTS – apply by 23 Jan

Grants up to £10,000 for community projects aiming to increase bike trips. Go to www.cyclefriendlycommunities.co.uk for application form/notes. Please discuss your idea in advance: Isla Campbell, 0141 229 5350. There's also a drop-in Q&A session for applicants on Jan 16, 12-2pm, at Edinburgh City Chambers, High Street.

BIG MONEY – apply by 31 Jan

Edinburgh & Lothians Health Foundation, the second largest NHS-linked charity in Scotland, has launched a new £1.9m Grants Programme to improve the health of local people. Innovative proposals are invited. www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/MediaCentre/PressReleases/2011/Pages/1206HealthFoundation.aspx

FORTH BRIDGE: No Bike Route

Spokes member Bruce Whitehead writes...

IT MAY surprise you to know that the Scottish Government is building a new bridge across the river Forth which will have no cycleway. Yes, you read that right: no cycleway. After an outcry over the original estimate of £4bn, the SNP told the builders to reduce the figure. So they removed most of the motorway links, light rail/tram provision, and unbelievably, the cycleway and pedestrian deck, reducing the estimated cost to £1.5bn.

Given that cable drying is successfully handling the corrosion threatening the existing bridge, it seems crazy to go ahead with a project that won't allow pedestrians or cyclists across when the old bridge is closed for high winds, or when it supposedly closes due to corrosion (very unlikely). It is also very worrying that funds can be found for a new crossing which could double traffic across the Forth when essential public services are being slashed.

It's not too late to stop this madness. MSPs were bullied into voting for the bridge under a media onslaught to ensure huge revenues for construction firms and spin-offs for newspapers which get advertising for new homes in Fife. There should at least have been better scrutiny of the plans. Even at this late stage, if MSPs can be persuaded that the project is failing to deliver the key amenity of safe walking and cycling, they may be willing to ask the transport and finance ministers to re-think the design.

If you wish to help organise opposition to this flawed policy... please contact Bruce Whitehead, brucek3ATaol.com, 07944 928702.