

*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](mailto:spokesATspokes.org.uk).*

This Spokesworker complements Spokes Bulletin 112, giving more info on some items where Bulletin space was limited.

## BIKE / RAIL

Our bike/rail rep is Ewan Jeffrey. **To contact him about anything below, or other bike/rail issues**, email [ewanATnavyblue.org.uk](mailto:ewanATnavyblue.org.uk). Also, if you follow up any points below, please if possible forward to Ewan a copy of any emails you send to official bodies.

### Scotrail Cycle Forum

Spokes, along with other cycling and walking organisations such as Sustrans, CTC and Cycling Scotland, attends the Scotrail Cycle Forum, which meets twice yearly. If you'd like Spokes to raise any bike/train issues contact Ewan [above].

### Bikes on trains to Inverness

Scotrail has recognised that the limited bike carrying capacity of trains on the Highland Main Line, Edinburgh to Inverness, is a problem for cycle-tourists and others. We congratulate Scotrail for easing the situation by putting on a train each way with capacity for 8 bookable bikes on weekdays and 12 on Saturdays. These are the 1035 from Edinburgh and the 1045 from Inverness.

### Haymarket Station Bike Parking Threat

Even the excellent new Haymarket bike rack leaves significant unsatisfied demand, evidenced by the many bikes wild-parked at nearby railings. But during the forthcoming station renovation the rack is to be either relocated or removed to allow a temporary access to Platform 1. Network Rail (NR) is vague about this and, even more important, about what provision is to be made as part of the super new station. **If this affects you, NR says it will take responses via the Edinburgh Glasgow Improvement Plan (EGIP) consultation, even though the first consultation phase has officially closed.** Email: [EGIPScotland@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:EGIPScotland@networkrail.co.uk).

### Possible tandems on trains trial

We congratulate Scotrail on looking into a tandem-carrying trial on the new Class 380 electric trains which serve North Berwick and Dunbar. This is currently the subject of a safety assessment in conjunction with Spokes. If it would benefit you, please send a supportive e-mail saying why to Scotrail's Transport Integration Manager, Des Bradley. Email: [desmond.bradleyATfirstgroup.com](mailto:desmond.bradleyATfirstgroup.com).

### Bikes on trains - don't get left behind!

Spokes has proposed to the Rail 2014 Consultation a flexible space in every Scotrail carriage, to better allow all stakeholder groups (including cyclists) equitable access to our trains. Meantime, taking your bike on the train sometimes feels a bit like Russian Roulette! The practical reality on the platform is that the guard rightly has the final say. Many will show reasonable discretion and allow additional bikes on, whilst others sadly stick rigidly to the rule book. Scotrail tell us that guards are allowed discretion, so it's a good idea to be friendly and efficient to encourage the granting of that discretion. Try to position yourself well on the platform as the train arrives, be able to take panniers off quickly so that bikes, pushchairs, etc are not queueing behind you stopping doors being closed and holding up departure. More bikes will fit in if placed neatly side-by-side and nose to tail.

### Almond Chord - threat to South Queensferry/Kirkliston Path - Standingstone Road

As part of EGIP, NR propose to construct a new railway curve near Dalmeny, linking the Edinburgh- Forth Bridge lines with the Forth Bridge-Winchburgh line, to enable Edinburgh-Glasgow through running by that route (also serving the Edinburgh Gateway tram interchange). This new curve cuts the Kirkliston to Dalmeny/ South Queensferry path. The drawings\* don't show

whether the path will be bridged over the railway, though verbal assurances have been given that a new bridge carrying a re-routed Standingstone Road will have bike facilities. As ever the detail will be vital. **If this concerns you...** please contact the EGIP consultation. E-mail: [EGIPScotland@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:EGIPScotland@networkrail.co.uk)

\*Web Page: <http://egip-consultation.co.uk/location/almond-chord>

### ScotRail Franchise

The consultation on the franchise to replace ScotRail in 2014 is now complete. The Spokes response will shortly be online at [spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk) : documents : public transport : rail. For more on the franchise and consultation, click on *Rail 2014* at [www.transportscotland.gov.uk](http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk). Of course it's never too late to contact your MSP if you have major concerns about the future of bike-rail or other aspects of the franchise [[www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com)].

## FOR YOUR DIARY

See diary in Spokes Bulletin 112.

*Remember especially our Election Forum, Thu 29 March.*

## NEW TRIKE!

**Spokes member Caroline Barr**, who has disabilities linked to cerebral palsy, had her mobility trike stolen last year, and despite wide publicity it was not recovered. Now her work colleagues have clubbed together to buy a new trike, which is also an upgrade on her original!



## PRAISE FOR SPOKES!!

The recent exciting Edinburgh Council budget decision [Spokes 112] was buried deep in the budget documents and not announced by the Council – indeed we wonder if many councillors realised what a radical step they were taking! Spokes identified the decision and its importance, and highlighted this on our website [Feb 9 news] after which the news spread rapidly, including items in The Times, cycling websites and transport professional magazines.

### IF YOU LIVE OUTSIDE EDINBURGH...

Other groups in Scotland [e.g. in Glasgow and Dumfries] are now planning to use Edinburgh's example to pressure their own local councils to do similar. **If you live in Scotland, outside Edinburgh, please consider taking this up with your council** – either as an individual or via local bike or environmental groups. **Please check our website article for facts and ideas on tactics.**

### SPOKES PRAISED

Spokes has received several congratulatory messages, both on our government budget campaign, and on our continuing work over the years which has helped create the climate in which decisions like Edinburgh's become possible. For example...

*"The link to the recent article in the Times about Edinburgh's budget decision has been circulated among CTC Riding Group members in Lothian and Borders.*

*We feel that this accolade is in no small measure due to the great work of Spokes over the years and would like to express our appreciation and thanks for that continuing work.*

*Duncan Ross, Secretary, CTC Lothians and Borders Members Group"*

## OLDER KIDS CYCLING

See also p2 of Spokes 112

Last year, Spokes ran the *Weans on Wheels* project aimed at encouraging and supporting more parents to cycle for everyday journeys with their children, particularly ones too young to cycle independently. The practical elements were delivered by the **Bike Station**, who ran demonstration and try-out events - at schools and the Jawbone Walk Meadows cafe as well as Friday drop-ins at their Causewayside base. They also offered interested families free, bespoke training to build skills and confidence - with very positive feedback and more regular cyclists as a result. As part of the project, Spokes produced a factsheet, *How to be a Cycling Family* [spokes.org.uk : downloads : advice : kids commuting].

Building on the success of *Weans on Wheels*, Spokes is now developing a project to encourage **everyday cycling by older children who might be able to cycle for school and other local journeys**. This follows requests from parents who participated in *Weans on Wheels* for support with getting their children cycling independently, both for transport and for fun. We aim to produce factsheets focusing on practical aspects, with two separate audiences in mind: parents, and also young people themselves. Involving young people is essential to make sure the right things are produced - in terms of both content and format - to reach the intended audience effectively. Spokes has already been working with school discussion groups, Sustrans and the Council to develop ideas on content, how best to involve other pupils interested in cycling, and to design materials so they appeal to young people. We'll be developing the parent-oriented factsheet in parallel. Hopefully the materials will be ready for spring/ summer.

**Suggestions or offers to get involved are welcomed:** pictures, title ideas, graphic design skills, ideas around using the materials to good effect, etc. Email: familycycling@spokes.org.uk.

## BIKE STATION 30,000

Source: [www.thebikestation.org.uk/blog/2012/1/25/our-30000th-bicycle.html](http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/blog/2012/1/25/our-30000th-bicycle.html)

See also 'Jobs in Cycling' on p1 of Spokes 112.

**The Bike Station [originally an entirely voluntary group with initial seed-funding from Spokes] has reached a great milestone, with 30,000 bikes now having been processed...**

*"Big numbers are always worth mentioning, and 30,000 bikes donated to the Edinburgh Bike Station is a milestone for us.*

*Our 30,000th bicycle, an early-90s Edinburgh Bicycle Co-op Contour, has already been reconditioned. It had been well used, showing that a well-maintained good-quality bike lasts well.*

*Over the years, every conceivable type, age and condition of bicycle has come our way. The oldest dated back to 1896 and was rescued from a skip. It's been fully restored and has pride of place in our workshop. We have had Japanese bikes with centrifugal gears brought over by overseas students, Swiss bikes with number plates, 1930s racing bikes, red postal bikes, a 1940s child's bike that the owner remembers being wheeled through blitzed streets.*

*Most of the bikes though are regular bikes for travelling around town, and with the growth in cycling in Edinburgh each one we repair finds a new user. Of the 30,000 bikes, over 13,000 have been reconditioned and are back on the road. Those beyond repair we strip and, as far as possible, re-use the parts to recondition other bikes - there's very little we can't use. Also, at our Fix Your Own Bike sessions, anyone repairing or maintaining their own bike has access to the vast stock of parts."*

**Spokes need hardly add that if you know of redundant bikes needing a new home, here's an ideal destination! A further rise in bikes for recycling will be especially useful at this time, as several funding grants are ending at the Bike Station.**

## TRANSPORT RESEARCH

The Scottish Transport Studies Group (STSG) aims to stimulate interest and research in transport issues in Scotland. Like Spokes, membership is free but donations are sought. Payment is also necessary to receive printed copies of its journal, *Scottish Transport Review* (STR). The website contains pdf's of STR back to 1999 plus details of relevant research projects. [www.stsg.org](http://www.stsg.org).

## SOUTH EDINB 20MPH

See also 'Safety Campaign' on p3 of Spokes 112.

**The following article was submitted to us by Edinburgh Council**

The Road Safety initiative **Streets Ahead** in Edinburgh comprises the Council, Police, Fire Service and NHS Lothian, and aims to encourage and promote safer streets across our city for all users. Part of this approach is the introduction of 20mph speed limits.

**Most residential streets in the area between Morningside, The Meadows, Holyrood Park and Blackford Hill will have a 20mph speed limit in place from Friday 23 March 2012.** This pilot scheme aims to create safer, more pleasant streets, in which more journeys will be undertaken by foot and bicycle. Speed limit signs and '20' surface markings will be installed ahead of this 20mph limit coming into place, instead of using road humps.

A parallel advertising campaign will highlight the benefits to communities across South Central Edinburgh of lower vehicle speeds. The focus will be on the minimal time saved by driving at 30mph compared with 20mph - only one minute saved over one mile! This realisation is hoped to encourage lower vehicle speeds whilst offering a notable array of benefits to local communities. *Key benefits of a 20mph limit on the majority streets are:*

### SAFER STREETS AND THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT

- 20mph limits dramatically lower the chance of being hit by a vehicle
- If hit at 20mph or less, one stands a much greater chance of survival
- 20mph limits also slow speeds on neighbouring (non-20mph) streets
- Fewer vehicles cut through residential streets - less traffic and noise
- 20mph streets often ease congestion which can lower journey times
- Health and well-being are encouraged through walking and cycling

### COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- Traffic danger is the biggest concern of adults when it comes to allowing their children outside to play, walk and cycle
- The 20mph limit pilot was supported by over 75% of local residents and businesses who responded to the consultation exercise
- 20mph limits encourage a greater sense of community by encouraging greater levels of street activity - streets for people, not solely traffic

Many of the main roads in South Central Edinburgh, however, will retain their 30mph speed limit\* since they serve an important role in moving traffic through the area.

More details of the 20mph limit pilot project can be found at [streetsaheadedinburgh.org.uk](http://streetsaheadedinburgh.org.uk), where you can also pledge your minute in support of making community streets safer. **Together, we can help to make our streets safer for all.**

*\*Spokes Note:* Several main roads were in the initial draft 20mph Order but, apart from Causewayside, they were deleted following police and Lothian Buses objections, with only Green Cllr Steve Burgess voting to keep them. However Transport Convener Cllr Gordon Mackenzie made very clear that this is an 18-month pilot and the question of extending the 20mph to main road sections would be revisited when the results of the pilot are assessed. Further info in the August 2 news item at [www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk).

## FOOLS DAY RIDE

**Subject: Music Cycling Tour, Whisky Fools Day Ride**

We've been contacted about a rather innovative event! Further details should soon appear on Facebook here...

[www.facebook.com/pages/The-Whisky-River-Boat-Band/144791812281519](https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Whisky-River-Boat-Band/144791812281519)

*"Cycle and gig trip from the centre of Edinburgh (Spoon Bistro) to North Berwick on Sunday 1st April 2012. The plan is to start the day around 11am with a short gig and fry up at Spoon, then cycle to North Berwick, on cycleways as much as possible, stopping to play 30min. acoustic sets in Portobello, Musselburgh, PrestonPans, Aberlady, Gullane, Dirleton and North Berwick. We plan to carry all instruments on the bikes or trailers. Hopefully we will get a bit of a crowd to come with us. Also possible is that other bands will join so the bars have an all day gig of cycling bands. We also know a few cycle personalities who may join us. The last music adventure we did was to canoe down the Spey, which got great publicity on Radio Scotland; we are repeating that in October with BBC TV covering the entire trip."*