

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.

FOR YOUR DIARY

SEE ALSO EVENTS LIST ON SPOKES WEBSITE

Nov 21 Consequences of Extracting Marginal Sources of Fuel talk by Sunday Herald environment editor Rob Edwards. At Open Door, 420 Morningside Rd, 10.30-11.30a.m. www.morningsidejandp.org

Nov 22 NPF3 drop-in event 3-7pm, Skills shop, St James Centre. Government seeks ideas for projects of 'national significance' - see *National Project* in Spokesworker 22.10.12 and www.scotland.gov.uk/NPF3.

Dec 3 Leith Walk Future, exhibition [see article opposite]

Dec 4 Nordic Revolutions: Cycling in Copenhagen 6-8.30 Free public event hosted by Scottish Parliament Cross-party Cycling Group. You **must** book in advance: Ben.Miller@scottish.parliament.uk www.nordichorizons.org/2012/10/cycling-in-copenhagen-nordic-revolutions.html

BUDGET: WRITE NOW

It is rumoured that Ministers are getting fewer emails about cycling investment than last year, and taking this as a sign that pressure for more realistic funding is slackening. This perhaps isn't surprising since last year's draft budget cut cycling investment hugely whereas this year's draft 2013-14 budget has a small rise [last year's *final budget* removed most of the cuts in the draft budget, thanks to large numbers of emails and other pressure].

However, even with this year's small rise, **cycling investment remains under 1% of total transport spending** [Spokes 114] with absolutely no hope of reaching the government's target for 10% of all journeys to be by bike in 2020. The current Scottish cycle use figure is just 1% of all trips [for commuting trips it is around 2%].

Wherever you live or cycle, it is not difficult to think of projects to greatly improve conditions and encourage more people to cycle. Edinburgh's *Active Travel Action Plan* contains many proposals which could happen sooner given the funding - linking up offroad routes, a high quality north-south connection, and so on. ATAP also promises to investigate a trial segregated onroad route - this too needs speeded up and implemented.

If you agree that the Scottish Budget needs to take cycling investment more seriously, please email your MSPs now, whilst budget negotiations are underway [www.writetothem.com]. Ask them to speak to the Finance Secretary, John Swinney MSP, so that the final version of the budget rejigs transport spending to give some hope of meeting the 2020 cycle use target. Mention one or two projects that would help you or your family or friends.

You might also suggest where increased cycling investment could come from. One suggestion is in Spokes Bulletin 114 p6 [*"Finding the Money"*]. Another idea is a charge on **out-of-town shopping centres** or a charge on **every shopping centre, based on the number of car spaces**. The previous SNP administration, in fact proposed a charge on big stores, though it covered in-town stores too and was not related to car space numbers. This was defeated by the other parties at Holyrood, but now, despite their overall majority, the SNP have not reinstated the idea! If you suggest this, emphasise that it would both raise funding for cycling investment and also discourage excessive car use. Thus the charge must be on *number of car spaces* and/or on *stores out-of-town*.

STOP PRESS - CYCLING SCOTLAND REPORTS

Cycling Scotland [the government-funded body seeking to promote cycling in Scotland] has just published their *Annual Report* 2011-12 and a *Report on Progress of CAPS*, the government's Cycling Action Plan for Scotland. Despite CS being government-funded, both documents are refreshingly open, especially on the lack of the funding necessary to reach the government's own cycle use target.

Find the documents [pdf files] at www.cyclingscotland.org

For *Annual Report*: Our Services - CS Services - Annual Report

For *Report on CAPS*: News - 13.11.2012

The *Annual Report* shows that over the last decade, in Scotland as a whole, cycle use has risen only very slowly. Cyclist serious injuries fell drastically in the 1990s, but in the 2000s stabilised and then started to rise. These statistics reinforce the need for research and discussion as in the Spokes 114 '*Facts & Theories*' article.

The *CAPS Progress Report* makes 3 main recommendations [abbreviated below for space reasons: refer to original for full wording]. It is up to the government whether to adopt these points - they are likely to consult publicly in the coming months then publish a new version of CAPS and any other decisions in Spring 2013.

- ♦ **Improved Leadership** - including an annual Cycling Summit between the Transport Minister and Local Authority Transport Convenors & Heads of Transport, together with a requirement on councils to develop strategies and plans to deliver the 10% target and incorporate cycling into the council/government Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs).
- ♦ **A refresh of CAPS by the Scottish Government** - to start as soon as possible, to link CAPS targets to the funding and other commitments required to achieve these outcomes, so producing a fully-costed action plan with intermediate targets to 2020.
- ♦ **Increase Funding for Cycling** - to take advantage of the wide benefit of cycling as preventative spending, incrementally increase the amount invested on cycling and active travel to the equivalent of 10% of the transport budget by 2020. Additionally, other budget areas should contribute to cycling - health, education, environment, sport and tourism. Finally, the full range of cycling's benefits should be recognised in the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) which is used to determine the rate of return on transport schemes.

URGENT: Ed Transport Forum

Edinburgh Council is setting up a Transport Forum, to meet four times a year and discuss council transport policy, and have input into the City's forthcoming new *Local Transport Strategy*.

There will be official places for various organisations (including Spokes) - and also 6 'Local Resident' places, for which anyone can apply **by Tuesday 20 November**. It would be great if some of these places included people who use bikes to get around for their daily travel. For more info and an application form go to www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/1868/transport_forum

If you use other modes of transport as well as bike, say this on your application form, as wider experience might help your application succeed. **Also, read the following for other criteria...** www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/1048/call_for_volunteers_to_help_shape_transport_future_for_edinburgh

MAYORAL MUSINGS

The Mayor of New York, Michael Bloomberg

"Our roads are not here for automobiles. Our roads are here for people to get around" ... "They are not for cars ... Cyclists and pedestrians and bus riders are as important, if not, I would argue more important, than automobile riders."

www.roadswerenotbuiltforcars.com/mayor-of-new-york-says-roads-are-not-for-cars-cyclists-and-pedestrians-are-more-important-than-motorists

The Mayor of Paris, Bertrand Delanoe

Bike-share (Velib), car-share, bus priorities and trams "are aimed at revolutionizing urban transport and reducing private motor traffic, to curb CO2 emissions and purify the air ... The fact is that automobiles no longer have a place in the big cities of our times."

www.ipsnews.net/2012/07/the-bicycle-revolution-in-paris-five-years-later

LEITH WALK FUTURE

The following circular is from the Leith Walk planning team. They promise to keep up-to-date information on the Leith Improvement Programme at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/leithimprovements.

“Work is progressing on a preliminary design for a new road and pavement layout with suggested improvements on Constitution Street, Leith Walk and Picardy Place. The preliminary design strives to balance the needs of all those who use these streets.

Consultation on this design starts in November. Focus groups will be held with attendees from within the area, followed by a wider public survey available in libraries and online, backed up by on-street surveying. Specific approaches will be used to reach less vocal individuals and groups within the wider community.”

We have now received strong informal hints that there will be some segregated provision at the top of the Walk (at the roundabouts) but not in the main section of the Walk – not even Elm Row. Better is needed, especially given the widespread earlier consultations by local organisation Greener Leith and support from Spokes and others. Some of the story so far can be found at... spokes.org.uk : documents : local : Edinburgh : Leith Walk.

A drop-in exhibition will be held in McDonald Road Library on Mon 3 Dec, 10am-8pm. Council officers will be there to discuss the proposed design and get views. Please do attend, leave written comments, and ask your councillors to support you.

LOCAL NEWS

Leith-Portobello route For a map of the new route see...

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cycling

For a picture, see page 1 of new Spokes Bulletin 114

CityCyclingForum is 3-years old – congratulations! - a lively place for online discussion on local cycling issues.

<http://citycyclingedinburgh.info/bbpress/topic.php?id=8753>

Falkirk Helix This massive canal and cyclistroute project (400km of routes) was mentioned on p6/7 of Spokes 114, since its size made an impact on the overall Scottish cycle funding picture!

www.thehelix.co.uk/things-to-do/a-place-to-cycle

The online map of the routes has also now been updated...

www.thehelix.co.uk/things-to-do/a-place-to-cycle/helix-cycle-map

Tramline Crashes Local solicitor Thompsons is taking forward several claims resulting from cyclist tramline crashes; we still hear of around one crash a month. If you have suffered in this way, please contact them, and also send details to Spokes, as explained here... www.spokes.org.uk/documents/public-transport/tram.

Thmpsons are 'campaigning solicitors' and plan to campaign for better conditions – probably for a traffic-free Princes Street. Contact details: Stewart.White@thompsons-scotland.co.uk. 225 4297.

Liberton/Gilmerton “Suggest projects for our 2013/14 Roads Capital Programme” <https://www.facebook.com/yourneighbourhoodsouth>

FORTH BRIDGE

Serious new worries have emerged over the cyclist crossing of the Forth. As we know, the new bridge [opening 2016] has no cycle/pedestrian path, with the existing bridge due to become a dedicated bus, taxi, cycle, walk crossing. Many people are sceptical how long this arrangement will last if there is regular congestion on the new bridge. **But now a yet worse fear has emerged.**

When the SNP came to power they abolished Forth Bridge tolls, so the taxpayer now finances bridge maintenance. With the new bridge now under construction, the Scottish Government has cut maintenance funding for the existing bridge for the next 3 years by 58%!! [Evening News 29.10.12]. Bridgemaister Barry Colford told the Forth Estuary Transport Authority FETA this means deferring several important planned maintenance projects. He added, “deferral of part or all of these projects increases the risk to the long-term structural integrity of the bridge.”

Evening News article: www.scotsman.com/news/transport/troubled-waters-as-cuts-jeopardise-forth-road-bridge-future-1-2603673

If this concerns you ask your MSPs to raise your concerns with Finance Secretary John Swinney MSP [writetothem.com].

For further information contact former FETA chair, Lawrence Marshall, email lawrence336ATbtinternet.com.

CASUALTIES RISING

Spokes 114 [p5] includes a challenging article, *Facts & Theories*, discussing why cyclist casualties are rising faster than cycle use, faster than for any other type of road user, and at the same time as helmets, the official answer to safety, are becoming more and more commonplace. Albeit that cycling is still very safe compared to many other everyday activities.

Since Spokes 114 came out, two interesting pieces of evidence have come to our attention, supporting some of these theories.

- ◆ New research in the academic journal *Transportation Research* discusses why widespread use of helmets in a country does not reduce overall cyclist casualties, even though some individuals are helped in some crashes. **We see this pattern in Scotland and the UK: casualties rising at the same time as helmet use became commonplace** [data in Cycling Scotland annual report – see col 2 overleaf]. The new paper *Bicycle Helmets: a case of Risk Compensation?* splits cyclists into 2 groups – a 'speed-happy' group which usually has lots of cycling equipment (including helmets); and the more traditional cyclist, with little equipment and cycling more gently (some use a helmet, but no other special equipment). The first group, even if more skilful, has more risk of serious casualties, presumably because of speed and more confidence to use heavily-trafficked roads. The paper suggests that compulsory (or, presumably, widespread) helmet use reduces the number of slower traditional cyclists, whereas existing and new cyclists of the faster, equipment-using type are unaffected. *Thus the composition of the cycling population changes bringing more casualties despite no more cyclists.* www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1369847812000587.

Spokes comment: By promoting images of cycling being only for the 'fully-equipped' could the government itself be contributing to rising casualty rates?

- ◆ A major cycling safety article in *The Guardian* [9.11.12] quoted CTC's Chris Peck on the incredible difference in casualty risk cycling on different types of road - **170 cyclist deaths per bn km on major rural roads but 8 cyclist deaths per bn km on minor urban roads!** Clearly total casualties are likely to rise if more cyclists feel confident to use fast roads, perhaps because they are 'fully equipped', whilst less-confident people are deterred from cycling at all because they feel it dangerous – changing the cycling population, as above. www.guardian.co.uk/sport/2012/nov/08/bradley-wiggins-shane-sutton-cycling-accidents

HELMETS

The Spokes stance [www.spokes.org.uk/documents/advice/helmets and Bulletin 113 p6] has prompted **Cambridge Cycle Campaign** [www.camecycle.org.uk] to adopt the following policy...

"Cambridge Cycling Campaign supports all cyclists as they go about their lawful business on the public road. We note that the law does not require helmets or high visibility clothing. The image of cyclists presented to the public has become so strongly skewed towards riders wearing those items that the legitimacy and status of those who do not wear them is being undermined. In order to help restore the balance the campaign reserves the right to decline to promote events or activities where helmets or high visibility clothing are required or implied."

A Cambridge Cycling Campaign spokesperson told the local press, “Event organisers who wish to have Cambridge Cycling Campaign help promote their event will have to think hard about their guidance to participants ... This policy was started in Edinburgh and we expect similar policies may be adopted by other cycling campaign groups around the country.”

A background article stated, “The time has come to put down a marker that sends out the message that we want ordinary everyday cyclists to be better represented in the media. The Lothian Cycle Campaign, Spokes, have taken a lead here and decided to stop promoting events in which helmets dominate.”

UK INQUIRY

Send your ideas on *Get Britain Cycling* to the UK Parliament All-Party Cycling Group ... <http://allpartycycling.org/inquiry>. As well as infrastructure and funding, consider the casualties article above.