

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

Feb 5 St Andrews rail link campaign CRAG mtg, Quaker Mtg House, 7 Victoria Terrace, 7.30 p.m. www.capitalrail.org.uk.

Feb 6 Speed limits and Climate change Summerhall Hub, 17.30. Book tickets free at www.2020climateevents.eventbrite.co.uk.

Feb 25 Critical Mass ride edinburghcriticalmass.wordpress.com

Feb 27 Greening for Health seminar on greenspace to reduce health inequalities. Details: info@greenspacescotland.org.uk

Feb 27 Active Travel Champions training session 1800-2100. *see article below* and champions.sustrans.org.uk/training. To book your place, contact aileen.brand@sustrans.org.uk 0131 346 9786

Feb 28 - Mar 30 Kids Big Pedal [to school] bigpedal.org.uk

Mar 2 Spokes mailout & Bulletin 115 [provisional]

Mar 4-10 Climate Week www.climateweek.com

April 8 Spokes public meeting – future of local transport Main speaker **Prof Iain Docherty**, with special input on cycling from **Jim Eadie MSP** [Cross-Party cycling group] and **Cllr Jim Orr** [Edinburgh cycling supremo]. Details to follow in Spokes mailout.

LONG-DISTANCE DIARY...

May 18 Pedal on Parliament Still vital! pedalonparliament.org

June 15-23 National Bike Week www.bikeweek.org.uk and

June 15-23 Edinburgh Festival of Cycling edfoc.wordpress.com

The edfoc festival seeks ideas/offers for cycling events of all types.

Week includes June 19 Spokes Bike Breakfast [to be confirmed]

VIDEO IDEAS COMP

SPOKES is working on a project to raise motorist awareness of cyclists, thanks to two donations specifically for this purpose. We are running a competition to seek your creative input to the project. **The best entry wins a bottle of Port**, value £19, donated by Peter Green, Marchmont Rd "10 years old, goes well by itself, with chocolate, figs and cheese." We may also publish the best entries.

We aim to produce a short video targeting ordinary motorists, for example on websites and through driving schools, but also hopefully to be used with taxi companies, delivery firms, large companies, supermarkets, etc. We may later also produce a second video, on encouraging cycling, e.g. for showing in local cinemas.

COMPETITION

Bearing in mind that the motorist awareness video will be short (probably 30-60 seconds) please answer the following questions...

♦ **What is the most important theme to focus on in the video?** For example, 'dooring', pothole awareness, central islands or 'Sorry Mate I Didn't See You' (SMIDSY), or what?

♦ **How would the video illustrate your above theme?**

♦ **What slogan would you use?** For example, a motorbike safety campaign used the slogan *Think Once, Think Twice, Think Bike*.

Please tell interested friends about the competition.

Send your entry (or entries) to spokesATspokes.org.uk by 11 Feb.

BE INTERVIEWED!

Edinburgh University MSc students on the *Participation in Policy and Planning* course, under Dr. Roger Sidaway, are devising strategies for possible council use to encourage considerate cycling on Edinburgh's paths. Each of the 30 students has to interview 2 cyclists. If you would like to be interviewed please contact course administrator Elspeth Martin [Elspeth.Martin@sruc.ac.uk] by Feb 12.

Everyone who is interviewed will be invited to a presentation of the findings on 26 March in the Scottish Parliament.

PRINCES ST PETITION

Spokes has launched a petition for a Princes Street free of motor traffic – open only to walking, cycling, trams and perhaps a low-speed electric shuttle-bus. Our vision is for Edinburgh to emulate cities like Copenhagen, Seville and Barcelona, which have reclaimed the streets for people on foot or bike, for buggies and wheelchairs, for locals and tourists – improving quality of life and generating new economic opportunities. Here is Amsterdam...



and here is Edinburgh ...



though for a month in 2011 Princes St was traffic-free, thanks to tram works. Here is one evening at twilight-time...



Our petition is on the council's petitions website: sign up now at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/petitionsdirectory.

If the petition gets at least 500 signatures from Edinburgh residents the Council petitions committee will debate it and could recommend development of detailed proposals for consultation.

Spokes's call is in line with the Council's own 2010 report by renowned international *Cities for People* planning expert **Jan Gehl**, which recommended transforming Scotland's premier street

from being 'traffic dominated' into a pedestrian-friendly, cycle-friendly, and lively thoroughfare with cafes, greenery and seating [see spokes.org.uk : documents : local : Edinburgh : Princes St]. Sadly, the council has taken no significant action on its own report.

TRAMLINE CRASHES

Princes Street now has a continuing tragedy of tramline bike crashes, around 2 a month officially reported, often resulting in hospital casualty visits and 'minor' injuries which can be disabling or painful for weeks or months. It is clearly only a matter of time before an even more serious crash. Many crashes are due to traffic pressures: a cyclist parallel to the lines but forced sideways, or a cyclist unable to position themselves safely for crossing the lines.

More background: See Jan 28 news at www.spokes.org.uk.

WHAT YOU CAN DO!!

- [if you live in Edinburgh] **Sign the petition** [see link above]
- [if you're outside Edinburgh] You can't sign, but if you are a regular or occasional visitor and unhappy with Princes St, **please email** leaderATedinburgh.gov.uk [and cc spokesATspokes.org.uk]. The council needs to know what visitors think. Thank you!!
- **Tell friends/relations:** twitter, facebook, email, chats at work, etc, etc. If someone well known signs, can their name be public?
- **If you belong to a relevant organisation**, ask if they wish to be listed on our website as supporting the petition.

WHY PRINCES STREET?

Of course Princes Street cannot be seen in isolation, and nor can bus/taxi patterns change without careful thought. If our petition brings action, it will certainly and rightly be action on more than Princes St, but we emphasise Princes St for several reasons...

An east-west cyclist route across the city centre is badly needed. The 'Inner Tube' map, for instance, shows clearly how cycle networks disconnect with a big gap in the centre of town. Obvious opportunities are (one or more of) Princes St, Rose St, George St.

Rose St has almost no traffic, and indeed is the current preferred option in the Council's Active Travel Action Plan for the 'family' network. However it often has heavy pedestrian flows, and is only suitable for fairly low numbers of cyclists.

In **George St** cars behave unpredictably as they 'cruise' for a space. This could be ameliorated by removing central parking, but unfortunately access to the street is indirect, with squares at each end and a northerly diversion for cyclists from North Bridge, Lothian Rd or Shandwick Pl. Also, the intermediate streets have 2-way cross-traffic; and there's no direct connection to Waverley.

A great advantage of **Princes Street** is that it links directly to Shandwick Place and Lothian Rd at the West End, and to Leith St, North Bridge and Waterloo Place at the East End - as well as to Waverley and the Princes St shops and gardens. It avoids extra turns and crossing traffic, except at the light-controlled Mound. Princes St is also Scotland's premier street and needs to be a superb example of a pedestrian-friendly and bike-friendly environment.

Finally if all motor traffic was removed cyclists would only have to cross the tram tracks on entry to, and/or exit from, the street, and could do this free from motor traffic, making cycling much safer.

Cycle provision on a pedestrianised Princes Street could thus offer the best alternative - a route which is direct, relatively safe, quiet, pollution-free, and uninterrupted; for commuters, shoppers, and access to Waverley. With the Gardens to the south, it would also be the most pleasant and inviting option of the three.

The council's Gehl Report [above] in fact recommends good cycling conditions on both Princes St and George St, and this is where the council should be going!

THINGS TO DO

Scottish Government climate disappointment

As we go to print, the government has published in draft the second edition of *Low Carbon Scotland* [RPP2]. See www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/climatechange/scotlands-action/lowcarbon/meetingthetargets for RPP2 and technical appendix.

The RPPs are policies and proposals to meet Scotland's climate emissions targets, and RPP2 follows the government's failed first, 2012, target. We have not looked at the document yet, but initial impressions from other groups are very disappointing - for example www.stopclimatechaos.org/news/2013/01/29/governments-plan-climate-change-not-credible. **Transform Scotland** says the transport

section is "even worse than the previous plan [RPP1]" and that while RPP1 'proposed' £1.32bn over 11 years for active travel, RPP2 proposes £2.03bn over 14yrs for all sustainable transport.

You can comment on the draft RPP2: see the above government website. Please copy your comments to Spokes.

Responsible Parking (Scotland) Bill (2)

Sandra White MSP's Bill to restrict parking at dropped kerbs, on pavements, and double parking, was lodged on 24.1.13. To reach the next stage at least 18 MSPs must sign up to it by 22.2.13.

If you support this Bill please tell your MSPs why it matters, and ask if they have signed up. Find them at www.writetothem.com. More info at www.livingstreets.org.uk/responsibleparking.

Become a Sustrans Active Travel Champion

What are these champions? www.sustrans.org.uk/support-sustrans/get-involved/volunteering-with-sustrans/active-travel-champions

How to get involved: champions.sustrans.org.uk/training

And with future support: champions.sustrans.org.uk

Safety Camera police survey

Give your views here...

www.surveymonkey.com/s/LBSafetyCameraPartnership

Get Britain Cycling

Has your MP (not MSP) signed up to EDM679, *Get Britain Cycling*? www.parliament.uk/edm/2012-13/679. This is in the top 10 most signed House of Commons motions this year. Find your MP at www.writetothem.com. Check at the above website if they have signed the motion; if so, thank them - if not, ask them to sign. One Spokes member MP has not yet signed as of today!!

EDINBURGH NEWS

Grit not Greet

Apart from one or two hiccups, Edinburgh Council has received high praise for its gritting of main bike paths this winter [Innocent and North Edinburgh Path Network]. See our Jan 22 article at spokes.org.uk for some comments [and a gritter photo].

This has happened for one reason only - thanks to the council's decision to allocate 5% [rising 1% a year] of its transport capital and revenue budgets to cycling. The revenue budget allocation makes planned gritting of main bike paths at last feasible, after many years of complaints and sporadic responsive gritting.

If you use the paths, please thank your councillors: they rarely get positive feedback, and this helps them feel cycling investment is justified. Find yours at www.writetothem.com. **And here's another reason to keep them feeling positive about cycling...**

The next council budget will be voted on in early February and doubtless there will be internal arguments as to whether the cycle allocation is worthwhile. The 5% is pretty safe, being in the council coalition agreement, but the 1% increase is less certain.

PATAP consultation

The council is consulting on a draft *Public and Accessible Transport Action Plan* [PATAP] - don't confuse with the Active Travel Action Plan [ATAP]! [Find it at spokes.org.uk : documents : local : Edinburgh : cycle policy]. **Please comment to it by 22 March** - the address for comments is on the final page of the document.

We need to see much stronger cycling integration in the main chapters - not just the introduction and appendices. Each chapter needs a sentence or two confirming cycling integration and giving main examples. Otherwise developers etc who go to the document may look only at the chapter that interests them (e.g. bus or rail) and not appreciate the council's cycling integration intention.

Bike Thefts analysis

Michael MacLeod has obtained interesting figures on Edinburgh and Glasgow bike thefts... <http://local.stv.tv/edinburgh/magazine/211233-four-bikes-stolen-in-edinburgh-every-day-see-the-crime-hotspots/>

Caltongate consultation - 13/00214/PAN

Developers are consulting on the area east of New St and south of Calton Rd, as far south as E Market St - a big area, but not all of 'Caltongate', so links are less obvious - but internal routes & bike storage/parking are important too. **Exhibition:** Thur 14 March, 11am-8pm; Sat 16, 10am-12.30, at Caltongate Venture, 5 New St. **Please go along & comment in writing or by email.** More info & comments to: caroline.owen@gva.co.uk 469.6068 [also cc spokes].