

On shared paths...



Photo: CityCycling Edinburgh.info

At Spokes we get letters and e-mails from walkers and cyclists unhappy about inconsiderate behaviour on shared paths. Two of the most common complaints are cycling speeds and dogs not under control. This leaflet sets out our ideas for ALL path users to get on well together.

Path or road? If you want to cycle fast you should consider using roads rather than paths. On shared paths, fast cyclists often scare people, problems with dogs are more likely, and blind entrances and hedges are also hazards. If speed matters to you, roads may also be more direct. And, for all cyclists, some paths may be inadvisable for cycling due to broken surfaces, poor visibility, lack of safe width, frequent steps, etc.

Footways (often referred to as 'pavements') are NOT shared paths! Cycling is not allowed on footways, except where they're signed for shared use, as shown here:

(The police normally show discretion towards younger children cycling on footways, and children under 12 are not criminally responsible.)



Access to all public open space in Scotland is regulated by the **Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC)**.

The emphasis is on ALL users behaving responsibly. See the leaflet **'Know The Code Before You Go'** from Scottish Natural Heritage or visit www.snh.gov.uk

Busier paths need everyone to be even more aware of other users, but can also enhance feelings of safety at isolated places and times.

Maps To find traffic-free paths in Edinburgh and the Lothians you can't do better than to use a Spokes map. *(For details see our website)*



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Design & small photos: Tim Smith

Path users may be cyclists, walkers, joggers, people with disabilities or horse riders. Any one of us may, at times, use paths in different ways. The key to sharing paths successfully is for everyone to understand and be considerate towards one another. If you are **cycling** along a path think what it would be like to be **walking** there – and vice versa.

Some helpful suggestions:

Everyone !

- ▶ Always show consideration – on another day that *other* path user could be you!
- ▶ On wider unmarked paths, keep to the left as much as possible.

When you're walking

- ▶ On paths with a marked lane for cyclists, it helps if walkers keep to the other side as far as possible.
- ▶ Stay alert for passing cyclists when using a mobile phone or wearing headphones. Will you also be able to hear a bicycle bell?
- ▶ Please allow cyclists to pass. If you're in a group it's safer if everyone moves to the same side.

Walking the dog

- ▶ Please keep your dog on a short lead, or under close voice control, when others are passing. YOU might know how your dog is likely to behave, but others do not!

When you're cycling



- ▶ Use your bell politely when passing others and say 'Thank you'. Sometimes a polite 'Excuse me, please' may be more suitable.
- ▶ Also use your bell at blind spots, for example before bridges on canal towpaths.
- ▶ Some people may be hard of hearing, others wearing headphones or just daydreaming. Slow down if necessary, and don't expect people to be aware of your approach.
- ▶ Control your speed! Be ready to slow down or stop, particularly near blind bends, junctions, or bridges on canal towpaths.
- ▶ Children, dogs and even some adults may move unpredictably. Never be cycling so fast that you can't stop if necessary.
- ▶ Cyclists in groups should be ready to go into single file to pass other users safely.

...let's share the path!

