

SPOKES

The Lothian Cycle Campaign

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20 August 2009

Dear Karen

CYCLING ACTION PLAN FOR SCOTLAND [CAPS]

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

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C The essential role of widespread visible onroad cycling infrastructure

D-I Specific comments on the CAPS draft document

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References

Appendix 1 - Spokes submission to the previous (2008) CAPS consultation

The most important sections of this response are: A, C, J, K, L.

Spokes welcomes this opportunity to comment on the draft Cycling Action Plan for Scotland. **We particularly welcome the CAPS target of 10% of all journeys in Scotland to be by bike by 2020.** We also very much welcome the fact that *the target itself is not a target for consultation, but has already been firmly announced by the Minister* on more than one occasion – originally at the Dreams on Wheels Scottish Government Danish conference in March 2009.

Before commenting on specifics in the document we make some critical general points...

A. FUNDING TO MEET THE CAPS TARGET [more detail in K and L below]

An action plan does not make sense without a parallel commitment to funding. Furthermore, not only is there **no commitment to funding**, but there is no discussion even of what **funding mechanisms** might be most successful and appropriate in order to work towards the CAPS targets.

Over recent years and decades the various countries to which the Minister has looked for inspiration have brought forward a number of cycle plans. All have included significant funding commitments in order to make a reality of the aspirations – and these countries have achieved remarkable levels of success. The absolute centrality of funding is also clear from research papers on those countries – for example *Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from Netherlands, Denmark and Germany [1]*. **The Scottish Minister for Transport, Environment and Climate Change has now announced a European-style cycle-use target – does he really expect this can be achieved without European-style funding?**

Finally, not only is there no commitment to funding, and no discussion of funding mechanisms, but existing levels of cycle project funding in Scotland are truly miserable – under 1% of total transport funding – **less even than the proportion of journeys now made by bicycle!!!** And, furthermore, under the policies of the present government **even this miserable level of cycling investment is falling further**. These are facts. They can no longer be dismissed as merely the opinions of an interested body, as they have been endorsed by their inclusion in *Cycling in Scotland [2]*, a briefing paper by the independent Scottish Parliament Information Centre, SPICe, who called the Spokes research “*the most comprehensive analysis of funding for Scottish cycling projects.*”

The Spokes research shows that reduced cycling investment is in large part due to two roughly equal factors. *Firstly* an approximately £3m funding cut to Sustrans in 08/09, with a further cut planned for 09/10. Sustrans works with local authorities and others to implement cycle infrastructure and other schemes throughout Scotland. This cut was largely to pay for the Smarter Choices scheme. That is a valuable scheme, but it represents a transfer of funding primarily from cycling (also with a large walking element) to cycle/walk/public transport. As such, much of the funding should have come from not from Sustrans funding but from public transport budget lines (or, ideally, from the huge unsustainable elements of Scottish government transport spending). The *second factor* was the transfer of capital funding from Regional Transport Partnerships to local authorities. RTPs (with a few exceptions, notably SPT) in their short life of capital funding invested at a reasonable and sensible level in cycling, whereas most local authorities have allocated far less of that money to cycle projects - meaning a net loss to Scottish cycling investment of around £2m in 08/09 compared to 07/08.

B. CAPS BOARD COMPOSITION

We have to ask why the CAPS document is so timid on the above most basic and most critical matter – cycle project funding. One cannot fail to notice that, with one exception, every organisation represented on the CAPS Board which produced the document is to a greater or lesser extent dependent for its existence on Scottish Government support, and so may not wish to risk being too critical of that government. Even the one non-funded body represented, CTC Scotland, was a prime initiator of Cycling Scotland, and so presumably has a strong interest in continuing government support.

There was on the Board no representation of the various Scottish campaign groups whose existence relies primarily on the financial and personal contributions of individual bicycle users, not on outside funding, and so who are able to take a truly independent view, without fear or favour. Nor were other respected voluntary organisations with major interests in sustainable transport, such as Transform Scotland or Friends of the Earth Scotland, represented.

C. A WIDESPREAD VISIBLE INFRASTRUCTURE [further comment in J below]

From many surveys and research it is clear that a *widespread* and *visible* infrastructure for cyclists is key to achieving high and continuing levels of cycle use. And key to achieving such an infrastructure is the **road system** - for two main reasons.

First, to achieve high levels of cycle use, the heaviest emphasis has to be on everyday trips – work, shopping, visiting friends and attractions, schools and colleges, and so on. Inevitably the bulk of such journeys has to be on the road system, and therefore **it is the road system which must look, feel and be safe and welcoming for potential and novice cyclists.**

Second, to achieve high levels of cycle use, the population at large must feel and be constantly reminded that using a bike is possible; is a normal expectation by friends, colleagues and other road users; and that conditions for doing so look, feel and are safe and welcoming. The road system is seen every day by the vast bulk of the population, and so if it looks and feels safe and welcoming for using a bike then the whole population is reminded every day that going by bike is possible and is seen as normal, not just for eccentrics, for leisure or for the very brave.

This is why widespread visible cycling infrastructure on the roads is so critical – firstly the road system caters for the bulk of journeys, and secondly the road system is seen every day by virtually every member of the population.

This is in no way to decry the many excellent **offroad facilities** (such as Edinburgh's railway path network). They are wonderful for recreation, for developing confidence, for families with young children, and (depending on their location, quality and directness) in some cases also for utility trips. However, alone they can never bring about the levels of cycling in the government target, and achieved in other European countries. Again with respect to the two above reasons, *firstly* offroad facilities can never cater for the bulk of journeys (except in fortunate localised areas and new developments) and *secondly* the public are not continuously reminded of their existence – unlike widespread onroad facilities, which are seen by everyone every day, they are not *self-promoting*.

Evidence for the above arguments comes from **European research** (such as *Pucher & Buehler [1]*). Secondly, from **Edinburgh's experience over the last 10-20 years**. Against a background of declining cycle use in Scotland and the UK, cycle commuting in Edinburgh has risen from 1% to 4% modal share, with the bulk of this increase over the last 10 or so years during the period when a widespread (if still fairly incomplete) onroad infrastructure of coloured cycle lanes and ASLs was in place. Thirdly, it ties up well with the **results of the CAPS consultation exercise** [CAPS pages 1&2] – respondents who were deterred from cycling had a perception of traffic danger, and the bulk of their responses were implicitly or explicitly calling for *onroad conditions to look, feel and be* more cycle-friendly.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS ON THE CAPS DOCUMENT

D. STRUCTURE OF DOCUMENT

The document, whilst containing many excellent points, is repetitive in parts and could be shorter, more concise and better structured. For example...

- Most of the *Background* section could be moved from the *Introduction* to an appendix
- The *Policy Context* chapter should be split, with the second part being *Future CAPS Implementation*
- The chapter *Day to day cycling* could be removed and consolidated into 'the chapters *Planning and Design* and *Encouragement and Incentives*, and those chapters could probably be shortened.
- The document should be more clearly *focussed around the headline 10% target*. The target is ambitious, and all aspects of the plan should be justified in terms of the target - with early priority to those policies likely to contribute most to it.

E. VISION AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES [p1 and some later pages]

We aren't clear on the differences and connections between the vision and the strategic objectives. The strategic objectives are scattered through the document, and some have identical wording to parts of the vision whilst others are worded fairly differently. The strategic objectives should be fully listed in the Introduction, fairly soon after the vision, for clarity and so that their relationship can better be understood.

The first bullet point of the vision should be reworded as follows...

*“By 2020 conditions for cycling in all Scotland's communities will **look** safe and welcoming for potential cyclists of all ages and abilities, **feel** safe and welcoming for novice cyclists and **be** safe and welcoming for all cyclists.”*

This rewording is needed because, *firstly*, the existing bullet point could be achieved even if only 2 or 3 communities have been transformed to safe and comfortable cycling conditions, rather than the widespread transformation across Scotland which is vital to achieving the cycle use target. *Secondly*, it is crucial that conditions *are* not just safe and comfortable, as the present wording envisions, but *look* and *feel* safe and welcoming, to encourage people who don't yet cycle. The need for conditions to *look* and *feel* safe and welcoming, if new people are to be attracted to make trips by bike, is clear from many surveys – notably the results of the CAPS consultation exercise itself [CAPS p1, reference to *perception* of safety].

F. THE POLICY CONTEXT [pages 4-11] – assorted incidental comments

p4 – It is stated that the Action Plan will consider the **Association of Directors of Public Health partnership proposal for 10% of transport budgets to be committed to cycling and walking**. However, the Action Plan does *not* consider this in any serious way. Furthermore, it should be pointed out that the ADPH report (*Take Action on Active Travel [3]*), with its unprecedented 10% call, was endorsed by a wide range of other professional and expert bodies, including the Institute of Highway Engineers, Chartered Institute of Environmental Health, Royal College of Physicians, Sustainable Development Commission, and many more.

p6 – The **tourism section** covers only sport (mainly mountain biking) and cycling as an incidental activity as part of a wider holiday. Whilst these activities contribute to the economy they will have no impact on the 2020 modal share target. As such, **cycle sport** should not be included in this action plan: it is irrelevant to the 10% target, possibly even detrimental, since the image of cycling as sport will not encourage the population to consider cycling as a means of doing their shopping or getting to work. We have never seen promotion of motor sport included as part of national roads policy – why should cycle sport be any different? The promotion of cycle sport should be a responsibility of those bodies dealing with sport.

Cycletourism, in contrast, might make a (small) contribution to the target, but is nowhere mentioned in this section.

p9 – We comment on **funding** in A above and in more detail in K,L below.

p10 – In terms of **monitoring** success in moving towards the 10% target, the greatest emphasis must be in onroad cycle-use monitoring, since that is where the bulk of journeys will inevitably have to be if we are to move significantly towards the target [see C above]. Yet it is easier to monitor off-road cycle routes, and that is where the bulk of current monitoring occurs. Whilst that should continue, onroad monitoring must urgently become more systematic and publicly reported.

p11 – The section called **Summary** is not in fact a summary of this chapter.

G. PLANNING AND DESIGN FOR CYCLISTS [pages 12-21] – assorted incidental comments

p14 – We don't see the **hierarchy of consideration in DfT Transport Note 2/08** as fully appropriate to Scotland in the light of Scotland's CAPS 10% target. CAPS states that the DfT hierarchy consists of an ordering of “*measures to manage the impact (on cycling) of motorised traffic.*” However, the Scottish 10% target means that the primary objective of onroad interventions should surely be promoting more cycle use, in which case management of traffic impact is only one (very important) factor. As we argued in C above, a widespread visible onroad cycling infrastructure is a major promotional tool, quite in addition to its safety or its motor-management aspect. For this reason, Scotland should specifically include provision of coloured cycle lanes and ASLs in the hierarchy, and give equal weight to “***Reallocation of carriageway space, using coloured cycle lanes, ASLs and/or physically segregated cycle lanes***” as to the top two items in the DfT traffic-impact hierarchy. Furthermore, it must be recognised that in practice there will be very many locations where local authorities will wish to encourage more cycle use but will not feel able to reduce traffic volumes and/or to reduce traffic speeds, and therefore the top two items in the DfT hierarchy are (regrettably) often little more than a pious wish.

p15 – Relating closely to our previous comment, **we strongly support the two final paragraphs on page 15, and most of their detailed wording.** We also greatly welcome their recognition of Edinburgh's success in increasing cycle use - and also the recognition of its *method* of achieving success (at a time when cycle use was static or declining in most of Scotland and the UK). However, we emphasise that the reference to Edinburgh should not just be to ASLs but to '*widespread coloured cycle lanes and ASLs.*' In other words, inclusion of the terms *widespread, coloured* and *cycle lanes* is important.

p18 – We suggest the section *Increased and Improved Awareness* be renamed ***Cycling in Rural Areas***, as the main point is tackling the serious dangers of cycling on rural roads – and the solution is less to do with awareness by cyclists than with tackling excessive motor speed. If CAPS is serious about its ambitious target, then radical measures are needed over this issue (as over many others). Rural roads potentially useful for cycling should be identified, and speed limits introduced far below the 50mph now being 'considered.' The island of Jersey (and, we think(?) a few authorities in England) have introduced networks of cycle/pedestrian priority minor roads, which also have maximum speed limits of 20mph or less.

A second point relating to **rural cycling**, not covered anywhere in CAPS, is that census figures show there was an important tradition of local cycle use in several of Scotland's small-town semi-rural areas – Moray, Angus, Dumfries, etc. This contrasted with no cycling tradition in the cities such as Edinburgh and Glasgow. Spokes has consistently made this point to successive administrations over the last 20 years [for example, Spokes Bulletin 69, Summer 1998; Bulletin 74, Late 1999] but none have paid any attention. As a result, governments have knowingly allowed – and, through their other traffic policies, encouraged - rural cycling traditions to be demolished (albeit compensated by increases in some built-up areas, notably Edinburgh). This issue must at long last now be recognised, and urgent efforts made to identify and restore cycling patterns in those small-town areas where some cycling tradition still remains.

p20-21 – We are concerned that **onroad coloured cycle lanes** (and onroad physically segregated routes where feasible) get inadequate attention in this table. The second entry refers only to ASLs, not also cycle lanes; and the later point about a distinction between bus lanes and cycle lanes seems rather obscure. We suggest that the second entry be changed to...

“Promote the effectiveness of widespread onroad cycling provision, particularly coloured cycle lanes and advanced stop lines. Cycle lanes should have double-yellow lines wherever possible, and peak-hour parking restrictions elsewhere. Physically segregated onroad lanes should be experimented with where space allows.”

The entry about bus and cycle lanes should be changed to...

“The term 'bus lane' should be replaced in all official documents (and signage where possible) by the term 'bus/cycle lane' to continually remind all concerned (professionals and road users) that bus lanes are for shared use. In the very few cases where cyclists are excluded, they should be termed 'bus-only lanes.' Bus/cycle lanes should whenever possible be wide enough to allow buses and cycles safely to pass each other. Normal practice should be to allocate the minimum recommended width to the general traffic lane, leaving all the remaining width for the bus/cycle lane.”

We are not certain how far the term 'bus lane' is a legal requirement, but if so then amendment should be considered.

H. DAY TO DAY CYCLING [pages 22-27] – assorted incidental comments

As mentioned in D above, this chapter should be subsumed into the previous and subsequent chapters.

p23 – The first para under **Solutions** rightly states that there needs to be *a fundamental change in the attitude of the majority of other road users towards cyclists*. One important measure to help achieve this is the **presence of widespread onroad coloured cycle lanes and ASLs**. As noted in C above, these draw the attention of every road user every day to the existence of cyclists, and their right to be on the roads – as well as making cycling look a more realistic and attractive option to other road users. Spokes believes that the moves in this direction in Edinburgh over the last 10-15 years have helped engender a change in the consciousness of the population at large, whereby using a bike for everyday journeys is now far more widely expected, understood, and 'normal.' **This expectation of drivers that cyclists will be on the roads may be an important reason why total cyclist casualties in Edinburgh have not risen despite a tripling in modal share for commuter bike use**. It is very regrettable that onroad facilities are often seen by decision-makers as purely a safety measure at individual locations rather than also a promotional tool and attitude-changer. The Edinburgh experience shows that they are both – indeed we believe the promotional role to be the most significant – and if successful that in itself is likely to result in improved safety per cyclist-km.

p25 – A more appropriate title for the section *Community Cycling* might be *Other Everyday Cycling Trips*.

I. ENCOURAGEMENT AND INCENTIVES [pages 28-36] – assorted incidental comments

Information and maps are of course very important tools, to which the remarkable success of the **excellent Spokes cycle maps** is a stunning testament – more than 100,000 maps have been sold over the years, most of them to a population of under 500,000.

However, all forms of paper/media/verbal information suffer from some problems – they are only seen/heard by a minority (often a small minority) of the population; they are ephemeral (flyers may last only a day or two); and they do not continually remind the population at large of the possibility of and options for getting about by bike. This is a particular problem for offroad urban networks, as their potential clientele is limited to those who know about them, who remember them, and who find them convenient, direct, or in some other way attractive. Of course, we certainly do not decry offroad networks, or provision of media-based or paper-based information – these have major roles, but are subject to the above limitations and require repeated effort and expenditure to repeat the message as people forget and as populations change.

In contrast, however, widespread onroad coloured cycle facilities are highly self-promoting. They are seen every day by every road user. Moreover, the road system leads to all destinations, and most members of the public are already familiar with it and use it every day. **Hence every discussion of cycle promotion, including this chapter of CAPS, should include a paragraph highlighting the promotional role of this universally-seen, constantly-seen and all-destinations means of raising cycle use. *What other form of more traditional 'promotion' could provide all these advantages??***

RESPONSES TO CAPS QUESTIONS

J. Q1&Q3 WHAT/WHAT FACILITIES WOULD ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO CYCLE MORE

There are many things that might encourage different individuals to cycle, or to cycle more; and a variety of approaches, carefully monitored, can be (and have been) used to help identify some of these, and the types of audience for which they might be most effective. Doubtless many suggestions will be made in response to this consultation, so we do not feel it useful to here devise a further lengthy and in part speculative and non-evidence-based list.

However **to achieve the ambitious target set by the Minister** it is vital that we start **rapidly** with measures which will impact on **large numbers of people**. What the public are asking for to make cycling more acceptable is no secret, it has been known for a long time, and it was yet again highlighted in the responses to the CAPS consultation exercise. **Primarily – a road system which looks, feels and is safe and welcoming** for everyday journeys made by bike.

There is no better way to achieve every one of these criteria (impacting on large numbers, looking, feeling and being safe and welcoming) – and to do so relatively rapidly – than by introducing widespread onroad coloured facilities. And, as we highlighted in C, G above, Edinburgh's experience shows this is possible, and strongly suggests that it works.

Incidentally, we don't hold up Edinburgh as a complete paragon of virtue. Our criticisms of Edinburgh in this respect were explained in our submission to the previous (2008) CAPS consultation [see Appendix 1 below] – primarily they relate to the rise in the early 2000s of the 'streetscape' philosophy (as understood by some influential Edinburgh then councillors and officials) in which promotion of cycling, council cycle-use targets, and even cycling safety, were subordinated to subjective visual opinions on what looks nice. Fortunately we think and hope that a more balanced approach may now be starting to return in Edinburgh.

A further related facility is the **segregated onroad or roadside cycle route** which has proved so successful in many European towns [1]. Unfortunately this may be physically impossible in many of Scotland's built-up areas. However, early experiments should be conducted with such schemes where physically feasible – in areas with high existing or potential cycling demand, and with a high public profile. Spokes is lobbying for such a demonstration scheme in Edinburgh on a main commuter route into the city centre, and also for Princes Street itself – Scotland's most iconic street. If the government is serious about its ambitious target then, given the European evidence showing the importance of such schemes [1], it should actively pursue, support and monitor this and a few other genuinely iconic schemes, to give a real message of intent to local authorities and to the public at large.

We also mention a third issue – which we suspect is very significant for inner cities, and probably also important for any town with tenement or flatted housing. There is evidence from Edinburgh that inner city cycling is suppressed due to the difficulties of **domestic cycle storage** [some evidence is held by Edinburgh City Council; see also paper by Dr Tim Ryley in downloads - technical at www.spokes.org.uk]. An early national initiative is needed, to *guarantee* that all new flatted development includes cycle parking of good design, convenience, security and management (not just unspecified 'cycle parking'); and to experiment with different methods of provision in existing tenemental/flatted areas – experiments to include backgreen provision, stairwell provision, indoor hanging equipment, onstreet cycle lockers, etc – assessing each for convenience, security, suitability, cost, etc.

K. Q2&Q4 WHO SHOULD DELIVER THESE CHANGES

The Scottish Government sets an ambitious target for cycle use across Scotland by 2020. It then disowns most of the political and financial responsibility for this to local authorities. That is absolutely ludicrous, yet it is what is happening. The government sets the target – therefore they have the primary responsibility for achieving it.

Of course, many infrastructural and other measures are implemented by or within local authorities – though often in conjunction with other funding partners, Sustrans being a notable example. And major other measures are undertaken by other bodies – including again Sustrans, but also ScotRail, British Waterways, employers, landowners, community initiatives (which can be quite significant) such as the Bike Station, and so on.

However, since local authorities handle the road system, and often much of the offroad network, their role is the most critical if the government is looking to achieving its ambitious Scotland-wide target for everyday bike-trip modal share. It is also absolutely and undeniably clear that local authorities have a huge range of responsibilities, and that many of them will not give the required emphasis to cycling infrastructure and promotion without new approaches by government to funding and incentives. The evidence of the annual Spokes financial surveys shows unequivocally that without proper government backing and incentives, many councils will not spend significantly on cycling infrastructure. Exhortation alone is not enough. ***The only years in which cycling investment rose substantially in Scotland are those years when government provided the necessary funding lead*** – the Trunk Road Cycling Initiative [under a previous Conservative administration]; the Guidance urging councils to apply for PTF money for large-scale cycling and integrated PT/cycle projects; the introduction of CWSS [both under previous Labour administrations]; and the more recent 2-year major Sustrans funding boost [under Lab/Lib administration]. ***Conversely, decisions by the SNP government, effectively cutting central support for cycling investment and providing more local discretion, have resulted in a significant drop in overall Scottish cycling investment*** – as recognised in the recent independent Scottish Parliament SPICe research briefing [2]. [See also A above]. Unfortunately all the above positive initiatives under previous administrations, although very effective while they lasted, were relatively small in relation to European comparator countries; and, even worse, most did not result in consistent policy or funding, with some being scrapped or threatened by subsequent administrations.

Thus the government must come clean – as we said in A above, if the government is serious about its European-level national target, then it must provide European-level funding opportunities, to make real that target. It cannot continue to disown responsibility for its own target to local authorities and their local priorities.

L (Q2&Q4 continued) - FUNDING MECHANISMS

Assuming that the government is serious about its target, and does decide to provide central support and financial incentives towards the target, how should this be done? This question is not even posed in CAPS, yet is critical.

Any new funding mechanism should meet the following criteria...

- It must start immediately, given the ambitious nature of the government's target
- It must be reasonably compatible with the government/COSLA concordat – at least until the next Holyrood elections, after which (and maybe even before which) the future of the concordat is unclear
- It must make financial incentives potentially available to all organisations involved in raising cycle use. This includes, amongst others, Sustrans, Regional Transport Partnerships, ScotRail, British Waterways, employers organisations, community initiatives such as the Bike Station – and of course local authorities.

It was to meet these criteria that Spokes proposed a new funding mechanism in our submission [4] to the Scottish Parliament's 2009/10 budget consideration process (and in an earlier letter to Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth John Swinney MSP). Our submission was discussed with senior government transport officials, who considered it a workable option; and it was recommended to government by the Parliament's Transport Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee in their report on the draft budget. Unfortunately, even though reminded again of this by Des McNulty MSP in the final budget debate, it was just ignored (probably not even seriously considered) by the government.

Current Scotland-wide cycling investment from all sources totals very approximately £20m [2,6]. We proposed a new Cycle Fund of £20m, additional to all existing funding streams. We suggested this be funded by a modest reduction in the planned £134m *growth* in the trunk roads budget. The Cycle Fund would be open to bids of over say £0.5m or £1m by any organisation (including local authorities) and be allocated by the government's Sustainable Transport Team. Matched funding (in cash and/or kind) could be a criterion in deciding successful bids. The reason for suggesting a lower bidding limit was to minimise government admin – but organisations such as Sustrans could bid for a collection of smaller related projects. Similarly Sustrans or Cycling Scotland could bid to set up a scheme to which community groups, employer organisations, etc, could apply for smaller amounts.

We particularly note that, in addition to its most central and vital role of fostering a high quality, universal, safe and welcoming cycling infrastructure, the Cycle Fund would likely lead to a wide range of innovative ideas and projects to further boost cycle use – see examples in M, N, P, U below.

That proposal remains in our view the right way to rapidly and cost-effectively initiate increased funding to raise cycle use in Scotland. It should be adopted in the 2010/11 budget – but now at a level of £30m-£40m, given the new and very ambitious government cycle-use target. For future years, further debate on funding mechanisms should take place within the next Spending Review, and by each political party in the runup to the Holyrood elections, although we propose that this new Cycle Fund be retained as part of the future mix of funding streams.

Our proposed fund has similarities to the very successful Cycle Challenge Fund run on a one-off basis by a previous Scottish administration [that Fund was monitored, and a favourable independent report is available, highlighting the value of making funding available to highly motivated groups who provide considerable matching voluntary input]. Our proposal also bears remarkable similarities to the Transport Carbon Reduction Fund proposed by the UK Conservative Party [5] to replace the current (English) Transport Innovation Fund.

Finally, we emphasise the modest nature of our proposal. Even at £40m this would only lift total Scottish cycling investment to under 3% of the total Scottish transport budget, a scratch on this government's *increases* in trunk road spending. That is still below most European countries, and way way below the 10% recommended by the Association of Directors of Public Health, Institute of Highway Engineers and others in *Take Action on Active Travel* [3] (as in F above).

M. Q5 EMPLOYER INITIATIVES

CAPS is doubtless already aware of all the obvious employer initiatives. **But how to make them happen on the widespread scale which would really do something to assist the government target?** The Cycle Fund we propose in L above would make all the difference, allowing coordinated bids from Chambers of Commerce, or organisations such as Sustrans or the Bike Station working with a wide range of employers – particularly those small and medium firms which cannot justify employing travel plan staff.

N. Q6 FINDING CYCLE ROUTES TO DESTINATIONS

Maps, signing and other such information can be very valuable. However, most people know where they want to go and how to get there. Usually they know the quickest and most direct route already. **What they want is conditions on the roads which allow them to make that journey in a way which looks, feels and is safe and welcoming for travel by bike.** As such, the most critical requirement is to ensure that the entire road system meets this standard, with widespread colour onroad facilities **as in J above.**

However, **maps** are also very important – for people making journeys to new unfamiliar destinations, for nervous cyclists who may accept detours in order to be traffic-free, or for people who just want to 'go cycling' for a leisure/family ride and want to find somewhere completely traffic free. The Spokes maps (of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and the 3 Lothians counties) have proved extremely popular for such purposes (see I above). We would like to experiment with yet wider distribution, and **a fund such as proposed in L above** would enable bids to achieve this (probably via a coordinating organisation such as Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, the local authority, or the RTP). For example a flyer with attached voucher for reduced-price map could be delivered to every house in the city, or in specific areas, and the results monitored for use elsewhere.

O. Q7 PUBLIC BIKE HIRE SCHEMES

We welcome monitored experiments. However, it is essential to their success that the road conditions look, feel and are safe and welcoming for cycle use. As such, **J above** is likely to be a prerequisite for a really successful scheme.

P. Q8 ORGANISATIONS WHO COULD TAKE ACTION ON PROMOTION

At national level Sustrans is very effective (often working with local authorities and others); whilst at local level, although councils have an important role, there may also be many existing and potential initiatives (such as Edinburgh's Bike Station) which could tap in to local enthusiasm and effort. **The fund in L above** would enable those organisations which are enthusiastic and capable in each area to set up such promotional initiatives - again probably via a coordinating organisation such as Sustrans, Cycling Scotland, the local authority, or the RTP.

Q. Q9 LEGAL POWERS / LIABILITY LAWS

We welcome the CAPS suggestion of a presumption of liability (until proved otherwise) against a vehicle driver who collides with a pedestrian or cyclist, or otherwise causes them to crash, as we understand to be the case in some other European countries. Awareness of such a law is likely to result in motorists leaving greater space when passing cyclists, sticking to speed limits, and in all ways being more aware of cyclists on the road.

There is an interesting argument that this idea should be taken further, such that the presumption of liability (until proved otherwise) should depend on the relative weights of the vehicles involved. Thus cyclists would be presumed liable in crashes with pedestrians, motor drivers in crashes with cyclists (and pedestrians), lorry drivers in crashes with cars, and so on. Not only does this seem equitable and consistent, but it seems likely to be more widely acceptable to the public than the original CAPS suggestion. It would appeal to the significant number of pedestrians who complain about 'cyclist danger.' It would appeal to drivers of cars – particularly the small cars which the government wishes to encourage. Indeed, if it contributed to car-downsizing by some motorists that would be a valuable additional safety benefit for cyclists. This proposal is a new idea to us, on which we have not yet had feedback from Spokes members – but we put it forward as worthy of serious consideration.

Finally, we point out that in any serious crash (and many minor crashes) the cyclist may well be dazed, unconscious, or worse; and as such unable to provide a proper account of what happened or to seek witness statements. As a result the driver's account may be the only evidence statement available, putting the vulnerable road user at a distinct disadvantage. A similar argument applies regarding any other crash between a heavier and a lighter vehicle.

R. Q10 ROAD TAX FOR ALL ROAD USERS

Pedestrians and cyclists should not pay road tax. The government (supposedly) wishes to encourage these modes. Walkers and cyclists do no damage to road and pavement surfaces. Indeed, trips by foot and bike benefit the taxpayer (and employers) through improved public health, more reliable journey times and reduced congestion - this of course excludes trips on loose paving stones!

Further, the government (and local authorities) are moving towards emissions-based taxation. How ironic if a new tax was now to be introduced for zero-emissions vehicles!

Indeed the question should be: *what incentives should be provided for using walk/cycle in place of car journeys?* It is disgraceful, and a sign of the still minimal real priority given to cycling and to cycling targets that the (UK) government introduced a car scrappage scheme at the same time as refusing to support a scheme under which individuals could purchase a new bike and hand in their old bike – and not for scrapping, but for refurbishment in a third world country.

S. Q11 SHOULD ENFORCEMENT POWERS BE BETTER USED?

One of the biggest complaints received from Spokes members, and a complaint often made by novice cyclists, is that cars are parked in cycle lanes. Local authorities should make far greater efforts to install double-yellow lines in cycle lanes, and to enforce whatever parking restrictions do apply.

Having said that, where the council insists on single-yellow only within a cycle lane, that is much better than no cycle lane at all, as it at least provides an improved cycling environment during rush hours. Dalry Road in Edinburgh is an example of this – albeit that enforcement of the single yellows is not perfect.

T. Q12 RE-DETERMINATION OF PAVEMENTS

This is useful in selected, carefully chosen locations. However, **making the entire road system look, feel and be safe and welcoming** (as in **J above**) for all journeys is far more important. Redetermined pavements can make a contribution to such a coherent network in limited cases, probably most commonly in very slow-speed localised areas, and on fast-traffic suburban arterial roads with very few pedestrians, especially if there is inadequate space for wide cycle lanes.

Where this is done, the needs of pedestrians must get a high priority. Whilst pedestrian/cycle sharing often works well in slow-speed shared areas, it could be a different story on commuter routes where cyclists expect and need to travel at a reasonable speed. Of course, on semi-rural pavements there may be few or no pedestrians. Thus each case must be assessed on its merits, and a balance must be struck.

A further problem with redetermined pavements is inadequate maintenance – especially sweeping. Glass, thorns, etc can persist for long periods, rendering cycling very problematic – and resulting in motorist anger if the cyclist uses the road instead of a cyclistroute which the motorist does not realise is substandard, or even unuseable.

U. Q13 WHO SHOULD IMPLEMENT LEGAL CHANGES

Clearly, depending on the issue, this is usually the local authority or police. However, resources are often the problem. **The Cycle Fund we propose in L** would allow any such organisation to run a special project to identify needs and experiment with ways of meeting them.

We trust our submission will be useful in development and early implementation of the Action Plan.

Dave du Feu
for Spokes

REFERENCES

[1] *Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from Netherlands, Denmark and Germany*, Pucher & Buehler, 2008. At www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher [then click publications].

[2] *Cycling in Scotland*, SPICe Briefing 09/48, 31 July 2009.

[3] *Take Action on Active Travel*, Association of Directors of Public Health, and others, 2008. www.adph.org.uk.

[4] *Submission to Scottish Budget 2009/10*, Spokes, 11.10.08, in downloads-national at www.spokes.org.uk.

[5] *Transport Carbon Reduction Fund* proposed by Conservative Transport Spokesperson Teresa Villiers MP – see extracts from *Local Transport Today*, reprinted in *Spokesworker* 16.3.09 in downloads at www.spokes.org.uk.

[6] *Spokes Annual Survey of Scottish Cycle Project Investment 08/09*, Spokes Bulletin 104, Summer 2009, in downloads – Bulletins at www.spokes.org.uk.

APPENDIX 1: SPOKES 2008 CAPS CONSULTATION SUBMISSION

Rather than going into every conceivable detail, particularly before a draft is available, we are restricting ourselves to two issues where our research and our experience provide particular insights, about which we feel very strongly indeed, and on which we receive many concerned comments from our 1000+ members...

- a. The necessity for the *Scottish government* to greatly increase funding for cycle projects
- b. The great importance, and the *promotional role*, of widespread and visible onroad cycling infrastructure

A. FUNDING FOR CYCLE PROJECTS

Spokes has conducted a survey annually for over 10 years to identify the sources, trends and totals in cycle project funding. We conclude that approximately 1% of transport expenditure goes to cycling. We are also fearful that our next survey will, if anything, show a slight decline, due to the recent changes in funding mechanisms by the new Scottish government. We contrast this 1% with the recent recommendation by the Association of Directors of Public Health and others [*Take Action on Active Travel*, www.adph.org.uk] that, for reasons of public health and environment, 10% of transport spending should be allocated to active travel, walking and cycling.

The massive differences between Scotland and comparator European nations such as Denmark and Netherlands in cycle use, and, in the opposite direction, in rates of obesity, and cycling deaths and injuries, are well known [Spokes 101, p1]. **It is widely accepted that the European successes have been achieved, above all, by really serious political commitment, including as an absolutely necessary condition high and consistent spending on cycling infrastructure** (as well as on concurrent cycle marketing in its many forms). Cycle marketing on its own, however, whilst relatively cheap, will never achieve comparable and continuing levels of cycle use. It is good to train and encourage people to cycle but unless conditions feel safe and welcoming most people will not cycle regularly – and they will certainly not encourage their family to do so.

Spokes Bulletin 101 [page 1] includes quotes from the Copenhagen and the Dutch experiences highlighting that a safe and welcoming infrastructure is vital to high levels of cycle use – and that this means money and political courage. Those quotes are supported by the 2008 *Puchler and Buehler* research paper^[1]. The message that serious sums of money have to be spent – and do bring results – was also a major conclusion of the International Velo-City Conference in Munich, with examples discussed there including Paris, Brussels, and (on a country level) Norway.

It is perhaps encouraging that Scottish Ministers do recognise Scotland's current dire position. For example, Transport Minister **Stewart Stevenson** has stated [Herald 14.5.08], “*With a modal share for cycling of just 1% we clearly have much more to do if we are to emulate our European neighbours who enjoy 10% to 30% modal share.*” **Kenny MacAskill**, Justice Minister, has said, “*Other northern European cities promote cycling, as do their governments. Not just Amsterdam, but the likes of Helsinki have made vast improvements for what is, both environmentally and in terms of public health, vital. I will write to my colleague to ask what steps the government are taking*” [email to a constituent].

Whilst the Scottish government currently has several initiatives on cycling underway – including this Action Plan – the plain fact is that total cycle project funding remains at 1% - static or possibly even falling. The above evidence suggests that the government will therefore fail to achieve a really substantial and continuing modal shift to cycle travel.

In other words the Action Plan – like previous Scottish cycling initiatives over the years by Conservative and Labour administrations – is unlikely to bring substantial and sustainable modal shift unless accompanied by a quite unprecedented and continued increase in annual cycle project funding. Unprecedented that is in Scottish terms – not in Danish, Dutch or German terms. We are talking of increases of several 100% from current levels.

Moreover, given the current *crises** over climate change and over obesity, increased spending cannot await a final Action Plan which will not even be published until summer 2009, nearly 2 years after the need for such a plan was agreed. Even if the Action Plan then recommended substantial new funding, such funding would be unlikely until the 2010/11 budget. Indeed, as that is the final year of the current Spending Review, there would then be a temptation to postpone any substantial spending increases to the following Spending Review.

[*The term '*crises*' is not an exaggeration, being used by experts in relation both to climate change and to Scottish obesity].

Spokes therefore urges an interim, immediate, funding initiative, on which the Action Plan could subsequently build. Our proposal would take effect in the forthcoming 2009/10 budget. We propose the creation of a new cycle projects fund of £20m p.a., in addition to all current initiatives, and to be funded by a small percentage reduction in the funds for expansion of the trunk road network. This fund would raise Scottish cycling expenditure to still only a mere 2% of total transport funding. The way in which the fund would be used and administered, and its rationale, are outlined in a letter^[2] from Spokes to be delivered to Cabinet Secretary John Swinney on 22 September.

In putting forward this proposal we are encouraged by a statement by **First Minister Alex Salmond**, in his Donald Dewar Memorial Lecture [19.8.08] that the government “*will step up our promotion of greener transport options.*”

Finally, there must be no question of the government excusing itself on the grounds that cycling expenditure is primarily a matter for local authorities. Either the government is serious about substantial modal shift, or it is not. If it is serious, then it must provide a strong lead, backed up by funding. The evidence of past Spokes surveys suggests that without serious government backing, many councils will not spend significantly on cycling infrastructure: exhortation alone is not enough. For example, the only years in which cycling expenditure rose substantially in Scotland are those years when government provided the necessary funding lead – the Trunk Road Cycling Initiative [under a previous Conservative administration]; the Guidance urging councils to apply for PTF money for large-scale cycling and integrated PT/cycle projects; the introduction of CWSS [both under previous Labour administrations]; and the more recent 2-year major Sustrans funding boost [under Lab/Lib administration]. Unfortunately all these initiatives were relatively small on the European scale; and, even worse, nor did all result in consistent policy or funding, with some being scrapped or threatened by subsequent administrations.

B. WIDESPREAD AND VISIBLE ONROAD CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Whilst funding is our number one comment, we also have a distinctive and important comment about onroad cycling infrastructure, based on our experiences over some years in Edinburgh. **In summary, we contend that widespread and visible (coloured) onroad cycle infrastructure is of critical importance, and has a major role to play in cycle promotion – not just in cycle safety.**

This onroad infrastructure could incorporate sections physically segregated from motor traffic. However, given the nature of most Scottish towns and cities, the bulk of it may have to be in the form of coloured lanes, at least in early years until car use is banned or significantly reduced in more areas of the urban fabric. As far as possible such cycle lanes should have double-yellow lines, though they are still of very considerable value if parking is at the least banned during rush hours.

Evidence for the critical importance of widespread infrastructure can be found in *Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from Netherlands, Denmark and Germany*^[1], Puchler and Buehler, 2008, which states, “*The key to high levels of cycling appears to be provision of separate cycling facilities along heavily trafficked main roads and at intersections, combined with traffic calming residential neighbourhoods.*”

We are very concerned that those drawing up the Action Plan may downplay the necessity for a widespread visible infrastructure, for the following reasons...

- Although astonishingly cheap compared to catering for motor traffic, a widespread visible infrastructure in Scottish villages, towns and cities would require very significant funding increases as compared to current funding levels. Those drawing up the Action Plan may be under an implicit (or explicit) understanding (or requirement) to keep funding at current levels or not significantly higher. To draw up an Action Plan without a reasonable idea of likely funding levels is clearly completely unrealistic.
- In very recent years there has been a growing tendency to downplay onroad cycling infrastructure. Amongst super-confident cyclists the negative aspects of such facilities have received great attention, even though many just reflect bad design. Also, what little research has occurred has concentrated largely on what is easily measured, whilst the possibility of any promotional element of widespread visible infrastructure has been disregarded. This despite the many European towns which do have widespread and visible infrastructures (usually occupying roadspace, whether physically segregated or onroad lanes or a combination), and which clearly support our view.
- 'Smart measures' have proved successful in raising cycle use in some towns and are therefore seen by some as the main or only means of raising cycle use almost regardless of infrastructure – and particularly as funding for infrastructure is limited. Yet where such measures have been tried and successful there is often an existing at least reasonably tolerable infrastructure in the corridors targeted. Smart measures to encourage cycle use in a cycling environment perceived to be dangerous or unpleasant, and/or without visible daily reminders of cycling opportunities, are less likely to succeed – especially in the long term.

Our experience in Edinburgh suggests that a widespread visible infrastructure does play a major role in encouraging cycle use. It is not so much the existence of any one route or facility, but the widespread provision of visible onroad facilities, seen every day by every road user of every kind.

Edinburgh Council for some years, starting in the 1990s, and continuing into the early 2000s, put significant effort into introducing widespread coloured cycle lanes and advance stop areas across the city. For example, its successful PTF application for the major Leith-Straiton bus corridor included £1m towards cycle facilities, primarily onroad coloured lanes/ASLs (also frequent shopping area roadside cycle parking). Similarly, and as a beacon project, coloured lanes were installed in Princes Street, with a big Council-organised public opening. **In other words, at that time onroad cycle facilities were seen not solely as a safety measure but equally or perhaps even more so as a promotional measure.**

As the 2000s moved forward, and with different top officials and politicians, the new fashion for Streetscape emerged. Now onroad facilities were deemed to be visually intrusive and so only to be considered for reasons of safety. Also, wherever possible, they should no longer be coloured. Subjective visual considerations were implicitly seen as more important than the promotion of cycle use. This change of emphasis was clearly reflected on the roads by the deliberate policy (stated to us in a letter from the council) of not replacing worn-out colour in many locations, and of often using black cycle lanes (white paint only) where new facilities were permitted (examples of both types of downgrade are in the Southside to Kings Buildings corridor). The earlier proactive moves to identify those roads where cycle facilities would be valuable, and to install them, ceased. Manifesto promises by this and the last administration guaranteeing ASLs at all traffic-light junctions have lost impetus, so that apparently there is no longer a continuing programme to ensure early completion (major city centre absences include important junctions in Morrison St and in Lothian Rd). In deciding tram priorities, crucial cycle lanes in Princes Street and Leith Walk are being sacrificed, to allow a supposedly visually-attractive central island between tram tracks (rare in other cities), as well as to allow maximum onstreet car-parking in Leith Walk.

Nonetheless, largely as a residue from the 1990s and early 2000s, Edinburgh still retains widespread onroad cycle facilities - albeit with colour fading badly in many locations, though with new colour in a small number of locations.

We are convinced that this *widespread and visible* cycling infrastructure has been a major factor in the increasing cycle use in Edinburgh in the last few years – at a time when cycle use has been static or falling in most UK cities.

What other form of promotion is seen every day by every road user? A publicity leaflet will be read only by a few people and, even for them, it will soon be discarded and forgotten. Widespread and visible onroad facilities make it clear that cycling is legitimate and expected, and they make it appear much safer. Therefore it would not be surprising if they encouraged more people to cycle, as Edinburgh has experienced. *Note* - There are arguments as to whether onroad facilities are in fact safer – we believe that overall, in general and if well designed, they are safer - but any such public health difference one way or the other may well in any case be greatly outweighed by the public health benefits of increased cycle use, and by the now widely accepted 'safety in numbers' effect^[3].

In terms of local evidence, Edinburgh Council in 2005 held a consultation on their Streetscape Initiative. They received an astonishingly high number of individual letters from cyclists [some 60?], all based on personal experience, urging the retention and continuing implementation of onroad facilities with coloured surfacing. **Spokes saw many of these responses, and they make fascinating reading, explaining how in individual cases the coloured facilities had resulted in more people cycling, in people thinking for the first time about cycling, in people feeling safer when cycling or when thinking about cycling; and how many people saw the facilities in a really positive light such as “a sign of a modern progressive city” - quite contrary to the equally subjective views of the Streetscapists.** *Extracted quotes from these letters, under various category headings, are published on p3 of Spokes 93.* Regrettably, this weight of evidence, based on real experience, was largely ignored, as it did not fit the new fashion: Edinburgh decision-makers looked for inspiration to Kensington and Chelsea rather than to Copenhagen or Amsterdam. The Council's downgrading of and loss of interest in coloured surfacing remains one of the biggest sources of comment and complaint by Spokes members. Only through constant pressure by ourselves have some concessions been achieved.

In summary, there is a vital *promotional* role for *widespread and visible (coloured)* onroad cycle facilities. Whilst there is also evidence that they provide a safer^[3] environment for cyclists, it is vital that the promotional^[3] role is recognised as equally or probably more important. Furthermore, with considerable evidence that increased cycle use brings increased safety per cyclist, the promotional role of widespread coloured onroad facilities of itself brings increased safety, quite in addition to any safety increases intrinsic to the measures themselves, and discounting the even more important public health benefits of increased cycle use.

Finally, and in case of doubt, we certainly also support other measures to encourage more cycle use - such as offroad infrastructure, and conventional marketing/promotional/smart initiatives. However, it must be noted that **offroad infrastructure** has a significantly lesser promotional benefit in the respect that being offroad it is not normally seen by the average member of the public (whereas widespread onroad facilities are seen every day by every road user of every type). It therefore requires ongoing marketing to deliver anything like its full potential. Similarly, **conventional marketing/ promotion/smart measures** are potentially very useful, but likely to be far more effective if the recipients of such marketing see every day that there are widespread welcoming and safe conditions on the roads. There is no more effective way of doing this than through widespread onroad coloured facilities.

Yours Sincerely

Dave du Feu

References [to appendix 1]

- 1 *Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from Netherlands, Denmark and Germany*, Puchler and Buehler, 2008, downloadable from www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/irresistible.pdf
- 2 The letter from Spokes to Cabinet Secretary John Swinney is at www.spokes.org.uk/downloads/campaigns-National.
- 3 For further information [with technical references] on the **promotional** and on the **safety** aspects of onroad facilities, see the appendices of the document at www.spokes.org.uk/downloads/technical-document0801.