

SPOKES FAQs for the Website (Written November 2010), slightly updated later)

IMPORTANT NOTE - THIS IS A DRAFT DOCUMENT - YOU WILL FIND MORE DETAIL ON MANY POINTS BY CLICKING ON THE TABS AT THE TOP OF THE WEBSITE, ESPECIALLY...

ABOUT

DOCUMENTS/DOWNLOADS

LINKS

MEMBERSHIP

SPOKESWORKER

BULLETIN

IF THERE ARE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THOSE TABS AND THIS DOCUMENT, THE TABS INFORMATION IS CURRENTLY MORE LIKELY TO BE UP TO DATE.

**Information below is in the following sections (with green headings)**

- **Spokes as an organisation**
- **Cycle campaigning in Edinburgh and the Lothians**
- **Cycling in Edinburgh and the Lothians**
- **General cycling advice**

The information here will be updated periodically as appropriate – please let Spokes know if you spot any inaccuracies, or have suggestions for other useful information to include.

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## **ABOUT SPOKES**

- **What is Spokes about?** [<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/about/>]

Spokes is the Lothian Cycle Campaign – a non-party-political voluntary organisation, founded in 1977, with a membership of over 1000. SPOKES campaigns (effectively) for better conditions for cyclists, especially in Edinburgh and the Lothians. Spokes' Objectives (revised July 1998) are:

- To promote cycling, as part of a sustainable transport and access strategy, and to ensure that councils and government actively do the same.
- To publicise the benefits of cycling for the community and individuals – like walking, it is cheap, efficient, enjoyable, healthy, non-polluting and intrinsically safe.

Spokes is the *Lothian* cycle campaign, so our main efforts and activities are in the council areas of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Midlothian and West Lothian. As a voluntary body, Spokes works primarily through encouraging its members (over a thousand households) to take action themselves. We also lobby the Scottish Government extensively, since our experience over the years shows that what councils do to encourage and cater for cycle use depends significantly on government funding arrangements.

**Core activities include:**

- Regular newsletters: (a) the Bulletin, a highly informative 8-page pamphlet, three times per year; with a print-run of 11,000 this is distributed widely across Edinburgh and far beyond, including to decision-makers in central and local government, and (b) roughly-monthly news-sheets, with details of new cycle schemes, events and campaigns. Much other relevant information (often from partner organisations e.g., Sustrans, the Bike Station, City of Edinburgh Council) is included in mailings to the membership and other interested parties – notification of major developments affecting particular areas within Edinburgh and the Lothians etc.
- Website – a great deal of reference material is included on the Spokes website – click on the downloads tab at the top, the Category listings and the Topics tags).
- evidence gathering – traffic counts, feedback on planning / policy proposals at local / national levels, local authority funding survey etc.
- Advice and information on all aspects of everyday cycling (not sport)
- The highly-praised SPOKES maps series (Edinburgh, East Lothian, Mid-Lothian, West-Lothian, Glasgow). Over 100,000 have been sold since 1986.
- Public Events, particular the well-attended twice-yearly public meetings (typically usually 70-100 people) on topical cycling issues, and presence at other events (e.g., Mobility Week stalls, Painting Edinburgh Green etc)
- Day and weekend recreational rides (all ages)

## **- Why should I become a member?**

Until recently the needs of motorists have been the overwhelming priority for public expenditure on transport, with public transport coming a poor second and cyclists and pedestrians trailing woefully behind. SPOKES believes that councils and government should have an overall transport strategy in which cyclists, pedestrians, public transport and motor traffic are all taken fully into account.

Over the past 30 years of campaigning by Spokes and its members, much has been achieved. Many miles of off-road cycle paths have been built, and an increasing number of on-road facilities, particularly in Edinburgh, are being provided. These include the cycle lane on Princes Street and the widely commended advance stop lines. SPOKES is now known across Scotland as a well-organised, knowledge-able and effective local organization, as evidenced for example by requests to submit oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament's Transport, Infrastructure & Climate Change Committee.

There's a Spokes flyer summarising what we do at <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/1004-tim-spokes-flyer.pdf>- if you're going to a relevant event, festival, etc, please do print out some copies to put on an info table or to hand out.

The benefits of SPOKES membership include....

- Spokes Bulletin 3 times a year (sometimes 4) with details of new cycle schemes, events and campaigns. Your mailings include lots of other information – new cycle route leaflets; special offer handouts from bike shops, forthcoming big rides by other local organisations. Many of these are only sent to members.
- Occasional email updates (roughly 10-12 times a year) about current developments affecting cyclists, relevant events, etc.
- Opportunities to participate in Spokes working groups
- Events, rides, youth-hostel weekends (all ages!)
- Advice and information on all aspects of cycling

- Advance notice of SPOKES publications – such as new editions of our highly-praised Edinburgh, Lothians and Glasgow bike maps
- Notification of major developments affecting cyclists in your area (within Edinburgh and the Lothians)
- Safety and campaigning materials

## **- How do I become a member?**

To join Spokes, go to <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/membership/>.

There is no membership fee but donations are much appreciated to fund our work. SPOKES receives no grants to meet running costs and we rely heavily on members for donations to finance our campaigns, publicity and on-going work.

People living outside Lothian (especially in Scotland) are welcome to join SPOKES, to keep in touch with developments and with what you can do. Of course, if you do live outside Lothian, your top priority should be to join (or to set up!) a campaign group in your own area. For links to other campaign groups in Scotland and throughout the UK see our [campaign groups links](#).

We're hoping that it will soon be possible for donations to be made online – watch this space.

## **- Can I sign up for Gift-Aid with my donation?**

Unfortunately, no, at present - Spokes isn't currently registered as a charity (it is a constituted voluntary organisation). However, we are actively considering whether the benefits of charitable status (for example qualifying for Gift Aid) outweigh the disadvantages (such as the additional bureaucracy and the use of volunteer time on admin, paperwork and meetings which don't directly assist campaigning).

If we do decide to apply for charitable status (and achieve this), it will then be easier to set up an online means of making donations and arranging gift aid (via Justgiving.com, or similar).

## **- How is Spokes funded? - What Does Spokes do with member donations?]**

SPOKES receives no grants to meet running costs and we rely heavily on members for donations to finance our campaigns, publicity and ongoing work. Spokes also has some income from sales of its Cycle Maps. Occasionally, Spokes is successful with applications for grants for specific projects (such as funding from the Scottish Government's Climate Challenge Fund to undertake some work around improving residential cycle storage in Edinburgh). Applying for such funding depends heavily of course on volunteer capacity to undertake the subsequent work.

## **- How is Spokes run?**

Spokes is an entirely volunteer-run organization. As a small voluntary body, Spokes works primarily through encouraging its members (over a thousand households) to take action themselves. Many members contribute in various ways to campaigning (with some donating significant amounts of their time) – for mail-out deliveries, writing to councillors, traffic counts, attending events and submitting views on particular issues etc, etc..

Spokes does not have a committee *per se* (its only designated officer is the Treasurer), but core volunteers work mainly through 2 working groups (Planning and Resources (day-to-day administration, events, coordinating ad hoc projects etc), with various individuals undertaking projects and tasks, often originating from or related to

one of the groups. Spokes makes many representations, ranging from local issues in Edinburgh and the Lothians to government consultations. On average there are probably several letters/ emails each week sent to councils, government, politicians, etc. There is also a huge amount of day-to-day admin, coordination, member feedback and follow-up, done largely by Dave du Feu, who also produces Bulletins, Spokesworkers, membership email circulars, our annual survey of government and local authority investment in cycling in Scotland, etc. Groups and individuals keep in touch by email, phone, and meetings (roughly monthly for both groups) as necessary.

If you would like to get involved with any of Spokes' various activities, contact the relevant convenor (via an email to [spokes@spokes.org.uk](mailto:spokes@spokes.org.uk)): Dave du Feu (Resources Group); Sandy Scotland (Planning Group); Tim Smith (Maps / Pathwork); Stuart Threlfall (Sunday Rides).

## **- I'd like to help in some way, what opportunities are there?**

As a voluntary body, Spokes works primarily through encouraging its members (over a thousand households) to take action themselves.

The Spokes website News pages have information on local and national transport policy that could affect you, news on cycle paths and road schemes, as well as more details on our campaigns.

You can really help Spokes's lobbying work by contacting your councillor(s) and MSP(s) about cycling and transport matters that concern you – find them at [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com). Spokes makes a big effort to notify members about significant issues likely to concern them, e.g. traffic developments or public meetings in their area, *so that members can take their own action* - attend a meeting, make their own representations direct to the council, MSPs, etc. This direct action by individuals is very valuable.

The Spokes Planning Group [LINK - <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/downloads/internal-documents/spokes-planning-group/>] meets roughly monthly and mainly responds to issues and developments relating to local traffic / roads / path networks issues in Edinburgh and the Lothians, as well as to planning applications. Minutes are on the Spokes website. It would be great if more members attended! Anyone wishing to be notified of the minutes regularly can 'join' the planning group even without attending, in which case they will be notified by email when new minutes are uploaded. Details of next meeting are at the end of the latest minutes.

If you would like to get involved with any of Spokes' various activities, contact the relevant convenor (via an email to [spokes@spokes.org.uk](mailto:spokes@spokes.org.uk)):

- Dave du Feu (Resources Group);
- Sandy Scotland (Planning Group);
- Ian Maxwell / Tim Smith (Maps / Pathwork);
- Stuart Threlfall (Sunday Rides).

## **ABOUT CAMPAIGNING**

### **- How can I keep up to date with cycling policy developments and news?**

Follow Spokes on Twitter @ Spokeslothian [LINK <http://twitter.com/spokeslothian>]

Follow Spokes on Facebook – Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign  
[<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=118534348748&v=wall&ref=mf>].

Email [spokes@spokes.org.uk](mailto:spokes@spokes.org.uk) to be added to the members' email list for occasional updates (roughly 10-12 times a year) about current developments affecting cyclists, relevant events, etc

The Bulletin is our main publication, normally out in Feb, May/Jun, Oct/Nov. This is a highly informative 8-page pamphlet, three times per year; with a print-run of 11,000. It is distributed widely across Edinburgh and far beyond, including to decision-makers in central and local government.

Spokesworker is our 'roughly monthly' semi-internal action-update. This is a news-sheet with details of new cycle schemes, events and campaigns etc. If you would like to have copies posted to you, please send a supply of SAEs to Spokes at St Martin's Church, 232 Dalry Rd, Edinburgh Eh11 2JG.

## **- How can I make suggestions for improvements to cycling facilities to the Council / other relevant bodies?**

This website has various forms for City of Edinburgh Council:

[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Council/Council\\_Business/Council\\_forms/](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Council/Council_Business/Council_forms/);

The general comments / suggestions / complaints form is here:

[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/council/council\\_business/council\\_forms/Comments\\_and\\_complaints.htm](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/council/council_business/council_forms/Comments_and_complaints.htm).

If you have ideas for developments to the canal towpath contact British Waterways on 0141 332 6936 or email [enquiries.scotland@britishwaterways.co.uk](mailto:enquiries.scotland@britishwaterways.co.uk)

Spokes would be very pleased to receive copies of any email correspondence you have with these bodies. Please copy us in using our email address - [spokes@spokes.org.uk](mailto:spokes@spokes.org.uk)

## **- How can I report problems with the road / bike path (potholes, broken streetlamps, glass, overgrown bushes etc)**

This website has various forms for City of Edinburgh Council:

[http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Council/Council\\_Business/Council\\_forms/](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/internet/Council/Council_Business/Council_forms/);

You can phone /email the Council directly (the Service is called Clarence) to report road, pavement or lighting defects. The service can be contacted by phone or email at - 0800 232323, [clarence@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:clarence@edinburgh.gov.uk)). Give as precise a location as you can using the reference number on the nearest lamp-post if possible.

There are other forms on the council website for potholes and lighting, and you can also report problems via council Neighbourhood Teams, but we recommend always using Clarence. Emailing Clarence means that you are left with a record of your message. Also, Clarence periodically has to report on how it has dealt with the messages received.

If reporting potholes outside Edinburgh, or if you don't want to use Clarence, you can use [www.fillthathole.org.uk](http://www.fillthathole.org.uk) operated by CTC. If emailing, describe the fault and give as precise a location as you can using the reference number on the nearest lamp-post if you can. If the fault needs urgent attention, phoning is best but if you have to email, make the email high priority and use the word URGENT at the start of the subject line.

For bad glass / dumping (in Edinburgh), contact Rapid Response on 0808 100 3366.

For Lothian Buses, contact [mail@lothianbuses.com](mailto:mail@lothianbuses.com), tel 0131 554 4494.

For taxi issues, contact the Inspector, 33 Murrayburn Rd EH14 2TF, tel 0131 529 5800.

## **- How do I go about setting up a Bicycle User Group to promote cycling at my work?**

See <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/links/workplace-cycling/> for some useful links.

The Bike Station works with many employers in Edinburgh and beyond to promote sustainable commuting by bike. The 'Better Way to Work' initiative (2010-11) [<http://www.findabetterwaytowork.org/intro.php>.] aims to reach small and medium sized businesses offering help to make commuting cheaper, easier and more enjoyable for employees in the city of Edinburgh and the surrounding area. All of the services offered are completely free to participants.

## **ABOUT CYCLING - IN EDINBURGH / LOTHIANS**

### **- How can I find some good routes for my daily commute and also leisure cycling?**

The *Spokes Edinburgh Cycle map* [INSERT LINK - <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/spokes-maps/>] is the essential guide to cycling in Edinburgh – over 100,000 of these fantastic maps have been sold since the first edition in 1987!! Roads and paths are marked according to suitability for cycling, and the latest edition includes recent new and planned routes. Cut-throughs etc are marked too which can be very useful. Smaller scale maps on the reverse help you plan journeys further afield. There are also maps for East, Mid and West Lothian, and Glasgow too.

The City of Edinburgh Council also produces a range of useful maps for families. The *Explore Edinburgh by Bike* series covers the whole of Edinburgh, area by area, and include detailed cycle maps and ideas for things to see. The "Explore Edinburgh Car-free" leaflets include maps of some of Edinburgh's best known cycle routes and ideas for things to see along them. Explore the Braid Burn, Burdiehouse Burn, East Edinburgh, North Edinburgh Path Network, South Queensferry, the Union Canal and the Water of Leith. You can download the leaflets from the Council website [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cycling](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/cycling); Explore Edinburgh by Bike maps are also available from Clarence (0800 232323 / [clarence@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:clarence@edinburgh.gov.uk)).

Sustrans ([www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)) is a national cycle organisation who manage the National Cycle Routes, of which there are many in and near Edinburgh and the Lothians. They produce a range of detailed maps (available from all good bike shops / book stores) showing traffic free routes across Scotland.

To find an ideal cycle route from A to B, try the CycleStreets website - <http://edinburgh.cyclestreets.net/>. The Walkit website is aimed at walkers, not cyclists, but in Edinburgh most of the routes it gives are also ideal for cyclists (but don't cycle on the pavement, and beware dead ends and one way streets).

Some other useful links below:

- [www.thebikestation.org.uk/cycling-in-edinburgh/](http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/cycling-in-edinburgh/)

- CityCyclingEdinburgh's website is a good place for information and discussions about cycling in general and Edinburgh in particular.

- The City of Edinburgh Council has a section on cycling in Edinburgh on their [website](#).
- If you are an Edinburgh University student or staff, click [here](#) for information about cycling at the university.
- If you are at Heriot-Watt University, [this page contains information](#) about local cycle routes and other cycle-related resources.

## - What groups are there that I could join for rides?

**Spokes** (thanks to the particular efforts of one of its members, Stuart Threlfall) organizes Sunday rides on (usually) the first Sunday of every month. See <http://www.snowcycle.co.uk/index.php>. Meet at 10am, at the Usher Hall, Lothian Road. These are free guided bike rides along cycle-paths and quiet roads to destinations in the Lothians, Fife or the Borders. Come along and experience the glorious Scottish countryside first hand with friendly people. Rides are fairly gentle, 35 to 45 miles or so. Lunch at pub/cafe, or bring picnic. Normally return to Edinburgh at around 4pm in Winter, 5pm in Spring and Autumn and a bit later in Summer, but no later than 6pm. We show the way, help with mechanical malfunctions, wait for the less speedy and try to ensure all have a wonderful time! Cycle carefully and considerately. You are entirely responsible for your own safety. Children under 14, or not used to roads, may only come with an adult. Light showers won't put us off, but persistent bad weather may mean cancellation.

**Greener Leith** organises 'We Love Leith' bike rides - for a full list for 2010, [click here](#). [<http://www.greenerleith.org/greener-leith-news/2010/1/2/we-love-leith-bike-rides-2010.html>.]

The **Lothians & Borders CTC** organises a series of day rides from Edinburgh throughout the year on Wednesdays and Saturdays. During the summer (May – late August), there are rides every Tuesday evening – meet 7pm, Commonwealth Pool; open to all (reasonable cycling competence is required though the group aims to be welcoming and will always wait; typical routes are around 20 miles, often with a pub stop). There is also the occasional hard-riding Monday run and a shorter run of approximately 2 hours on the third Sunday of each month. Details of all of these rides can be obtained from the website - <http://www.ctclothians.org.uk/rl.html>

The website [www.cycling-edinburgh.org.uk](http://www.cycling-edinburgh.org.uk) provides an up-to-date **listing** of all organised cycle rides in or near Edinburgh, including the "Twenty Milers" leisure rides. These rides are run by local cycling clubs and groups, and are mostly free of charge and open to all.

**Livingston & West Lothian CTC** organise easy to moderate bike rides around West Lothian, meet outside Excite Gyms in Livingston at 10 am. the second Sunday of the month.

Various road clubs exist for road-bikes and racing etc.

Other cycling organisations arrange rides periodically too – see [Cycling Scotland](#) <http://www.cyclingscotland.org/> for cycle rides across Scotland, and <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/join-a-bike-ride/>. Other useful links include – <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/links/edinburgh-cycling-info-organisations/>; <http://www.ctclothians.org.uk/links.html>

## - Where can I get a good cheap bike for everyday use?

To locate bike shops in your area, see <http://www.thecyclingexperts.co.uk/>.

You may be able to get some assistance with the cost of buying a new bike under the Government's Bike to Work Scheme. This aims to help employers offer their employees savings of up to 50% on the cost of bicycles

and safety equipment made available through the Government's Green Transport Plan. They work in association with particular bike shops. See <http://www.bike2workscheme.co.uk/>

The Bike Station (on Causewayside, Newington) is Edinburgh's bicycle recycling and cycling promotion charity. It repairs unwanted bikes and sells refurbished bikes to promote cycling as a healthy and sustainable means of transport across Edinburgh, the Lothians and beyond. See <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/> for opening hours and further details of the weekly Bike Sales. All the bikes are fully reconditioned by qualified mechanics and come with a three-month warranty.

Be wary of buying a bike on e-bay, gumtree or anywhere else on line. Please try to be sure that the seller is the genuine owner and is not using the internet to sell a stolen bike. Be especially wary of sellers selling multiple bikes.

## **- Where Can I hire a bike?**

The Cycling Edinburgh website has information on where to hire a bike – see <http://www.cycling-edinburgh.org.uk/rent-bike-edinburgh.htm>. Edinburgh's largest bicycle hire outlet is [Biketrax](#) (11-13 Lochrin Place; 0131 228 6633). They have a wide range of machines available, mainly 21- and 24-speed mountain bikes and city bikes (hybrids). They also rent out Brompton folding bikes. Their mountain bikes have full suspension, and all models are equipped with a padded saddle.

Alternatively, think about buying a cheap second-hand bike from somewhere like the Bike Station.

## **ABOUT CYCLING - GENERAL ADVICE**

### **- Where can I get technical advice, e.g., on mending a puncture?**

There are plenty of websites with maintenance tutorials, such as: [Weldtite](#), [Park Tools](#), and [YouTube](#), also [http://www.edinburghbicycle.com/comms/srv.a4d?f\\_pg=site\\_info/how-to.htm](http://www.edinburghbicycle.com/comms/srv.a4d?f_pg=site_info/how-to.htm).

The Bike Station is a good source of information and advice:

- some general tips: <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/top-cycling-tips/>
- tips on repairs - <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/repairtips/>
- evening classes <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/eveningclasses/>

The Bike Station has sessions where you can repair your own bike using their tools (their “Fix Your Own Bike” facility). They also have experienced staff on hand to provide advice. More details are at <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/fyob/>.

The CTC has an online forum for queries etc on a wide range of cycling matters: <http://forum.ctc.org.uk/>.

### **- Where can I get my bike fixed?**

Most of Edinburgh's commercial bike shops offer bike services and will carry out repairs. For bike shops in your area, see <http://www.thecyclingexperts.co.uk/>.

The Bike Station runs “Fix Your Own Bike” sessions (<http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/fyob/>), and also has a visiting ‘Dr Bike’ service which carries out basic bike repairs off-site (good for employers, schools / other groups running events etc); more details can be found [here](#) - <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/dr-bike/>.



## **- How can I avoid getting my bike stolen?**

Follow this link for advice on Lothian & Borders Police leaflets on bike security:

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/downloads/advice/security/>

There is a lot that you can do to reduce the risk of theft, in particular,

- Buy a proper bike lock. The more you spend, the better the lock. But just as important is where and how you lock your bike. Lock the frame, not the wheel or other removable item, especially if you have a quick release wheel.
- Try and lock your bike in a place that is well lit and likely to be in public view. If possible avoid places that are hidden where a thief can use lock breaking equipment without being seen.
- Think about registering your bike with the Bike Register. Registration of your bike's unique features (including the frame's reference number – usually stamped into the bottom bracket) is free. Police forces like Lothian and Borders, though not yet all forces, are working towards checking recovered bikes against the register. If you use the Bike Register's paid for services, you will receive stickers to put on your bike. The intention of these is that they will deter theft as would be thieves will know they are taking an item that is traceable.
- Keep a record of your bikes principle features, including the frame number (usually found on the bottom bracket – the bit where the pedals connect) so that if you do face a theft, you can pass on the details to the police

If you leave your bike in a garden shed, make sure it is secure. Check the lock can't be easily prised off the door and that the hinges cant be easily unscrewed.

Also advice from: <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/how-to-lock-your-bike/>

## **- What do I do if my bike has been stolen?**

You should report this to the police as soon as possible. The more information you can give about your bike's unique features the better. You should be given a reference number by the police and you can use this to phone back later to check if there has been any progress recovering your bike.

Yu might also want to check Gumtree and eBay periodically for the next few weeks to see if your bike appears there. If you are fairly sure someone is trying to sell your stolen bike, contact the police so that they can take the necessary recovery action.

## **- What do I do if I've had a road accident involving a vehicle?**

Follow this link for a Spokes Note advising cyclists what to do if involved in or witnessing a bike crash:

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/downloads/advice/accidents/>. It is very, very important to try and get a witness (get his/her contact details), if you are planning to contact the Police about the incident with a view to taking further action – otherwise it will be very hard to get them to do anything as follow-up.

If you have had an accident involving TRAMTRACKS, you should report it to TIE – more info here [<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/downloads/public-transport/tram/>]. Freephone 0800 328 3934 or you can email [info@edinburghtrams.com](mailto:info@edinburghtrams.com) or write to Freepost RRYA-BBTU-HAUB, Edinburgh Trams, Edinburgh EH12 5HD.

The CTC offers some advice here: <http://www.rjw.co.uk/legal-services/unions-federations-charities/membership-organisations/ctc/road-traffic-collisions/>. It offers amongst its membership benefits access to a cycling legal advice helpline and assistance following accidents (<http://www.ctc.org.uk/desktopdefault.aspx?tabid=4089>).

For dangerous drivers, mobile use, drink-driving, speeding and other road crimes, Freephone Crimestoppers 0800 555111.

For emotional / practical victim support, contact RoadPeace, 020 8964 1021.

## **- How can I go about getting some cycle training?**

The Bike Station offers a range of different types of training – see <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/training/>.

## **- How can I find out about taking my bike on trains, planes, buses and ferries?**

Visit [www.travelinescotland.com](http://www.travelinescotland.com), or contact the transport operator.  
For Scotrail, see <http://www.scotrail.co.uk/cycling>

For travel by bus with a bike, see <http://www.travelinescotland.com/cms/Travelbybike.xhtml>. On Lothian Buses, folding bicycles which are fully folded and completely enclosed in a suitable carrying bag are permitted. No other bicycles are permitted.

## **- What can I do with an old bike I no longer want (e.g., as I can't repair it)?**

The Bike Station (Causewayside, Newington) takes any used/old/discarded/unwanted bike, no matter its age or condition (<http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/donate/>). It also takes any unwanted parts and accessories, such as old locks (with a key/combination!), lights, bike panniers etc. The only things it cannot take are old bike helmets. It can also help with sorting out problems of abandoned bikes in stairwells – the website has a factsheet to download.

If you live in **East Lothian** you can take your old bike to the recycling centre at [Kinwegar](#). The Bike Station also now has a centre in Perth.

## **- Where can I get advice on cycling with children?**

A Spokes factsheet on cycle-commuting with children (family travel for work / nursery / school) is under development – watch this space. The London Cycle Campaign has some useful information on its website - <http://www.lcc.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=380>.

The CTC also has a webpage on cycling with babies and children:  
<http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3595>

## **- How can my child get cycling proficiency training?**

Speak to your child's school – many schools now offer cycling training in P6 / P7. The Council School Travel Coordinators and Active Schools Coordinators may also be able to help. Ready Steady Bike is offered from P4 where control skills are taught through cycling games in the school grounds. The Scottish Cycle Training Scheme is offered at P6 or 7 and teaches skills necessary for riding on the road. To arrange cycle training in City of Edinburgh Council run schools, please contact Active Schools Co-ordinator (Andrew Caldwell at the time of writing; [andrew.caldwell@ea.edin.sch.uk](mailto:andrew.caldwell@ea.edin.sch.uk) tel 07884 203270).

The Bike Station can offer training, and works with various schools (<http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/schools/>)

## **- Where can I get advice on cycling with a disability?**

Some information is available from the London Cycle Campaign's website - <http://www.lcc.org.uk/index.asp?PageID=73>. Some info here too: [http://www.whycycle.co.uk/cycling\\_with\\_disability/](http://www.whycycle.co.uk/cycling_with_disability/). They have produced a pamphlet on 'All Ability Cycling – A guide for Greater London' – which might have some pointers or ideas for elsewhere too.

*Spokes would be interested to hear from anyone who can offer / point to good sources of advice to share.*

## **- I haven't cycled since I was a kid/teenager... how do I get my confidence up to get back into it?**

The Bike Station offers training for all abilities - <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/training/>. The website also has various downloads on cycling safely (<http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/cycle-safety/>), including across tramtracks <http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/storage/Cycling%20and%20trams%20leaflet.pdf> (best print it out as the most useful page comes out upside down).

The CTC has a section on its website on Cycling Skills and Tips:  
<http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3376>

The Edinburgh Leisure 'Ageing Well' project also runs cycle rides for over 50s.

## **- How can I find out about sponsored rides?**

The Cycling Scotland website lists various organized rides in which you might like to participate – see here for details [[www.cyclingscotland.com](http://www.cyclingscotland.com)].

BikeEventsScotland.com (<http://www.bikeeventsscotland.com/>) contains comprehensive listing for all types of cycling events in Scotland, including beginner rides, family rides, fundraising rides, mountain biking events, sportives and road cycling and much more. It has been developed by [Cycling Scotland](#), [Sustrans](#), [Forestry Commission Scotland](#), [CTC](#), [Visit Scotland](#) and [Scottish Cycling](#) and is a one-stop-shop for all cycling events in Scotland.

## **- I'm organising a sponsored ride - can Spokes help?**

Spokes is happy to publicise members' cycling-related fundraising efforts etc via the website, email, Spokesworker etc (space and time permitting) - see <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/links/sponsorships/>.

Generally speaking we would only mention environmentally-conscious fundraising efforts – e.g. not normally if they involved air travel or large amounts of motor vehicle involvement, such as distant mountain-bike events.

The CTC has a section on its website about charity rides:

- Organising an event: <http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3530>
- Charity Rides Advice: <http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=3391>.

## **- Can we reproduce some of the Spokes cycle mapping?**

Contact us and we will usually give permission for non-commercial uses, providing you acknowledge the source and how people can buy the full map.

## **- Is cycling in Edinburgh dangerous?**

Not if you are a confident rider and take care; be assertive (as distinct from aggressive) where appropriate. Remember that bikes are legitimate road users too – cycle on the road, where you're more visible than in the gutter (which may also be potholed). Wearing a Hi Viz vest is helpful too. Never under-take at junctions, esp HGVs- this is a common source of cycling fatalities as lorry drivers can't see cyclists and the vehicle will swing over the space as it turns. The cycle map shows recommended routes, and that training is available.

The CTC has some tips on its website: <http://www.ctc.org.uk/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabID=5142>.

We are aware that research makes clear that for very high levels of bike use (as in Europe) facilities which are perceived as safe and welcoming are essential., including routes which are both convenient and, in many cases, segregated. Onroad cycle lanes are also very valuable where the above is not currently feasible, whether for political or physical reasons – they do encourage more people to cycle, though not as many as a proper European-style infrastructure. The council's Active Travel Action Plan, with its 2-prongs of 'cycle friendly city' and 'family network' is working on both angles.

## **- Is it OK to cycle on pavements if I'm worried about traffic?**

The Highway Code is absolutely clear "You MUST NOT cycle on a pavement" (item 64) i.e. no discretion allowed. The exception is where the pavement has been designated as "shared use" pedestrian and cycle space. The line from the police is that the age of criminal responsibility is 10, so they won't be prosecuting anyone younger than that for pavement riding.

Spokes does its best to promote good behaviour, though generally this amounts to commonsense! Many of the city's cycle paths are shared use, so sensible sharing is vital. Slow down and use your bell before passing pedestrians etc etc.

See the Spokes [Polite Cycling campaign](http://www.politecycling.info/edinburgh.html) website [http://www.politecycling.info/edinburgh.html] for information about safe and polite cycling in Edinburgh.