

Spokes Action Update 24.01.15

... This is a circular to emailable Spokes members. If you recently sent us a change of email address it may not yet be in our database, so this message may go to your old address or possibly to both.

... When using email addresses below, replace [AT] by @.

1. FOR YOUR DIARY

- March 26 **Cycling in the City Centre** Spokes Spring Public Meeting - the future for the immediate central area, George Street, Princes Street, etc. Headline speaker – **Cllr Lesley Hinds**, Transport Convener of Edinburgh City Council. Also **Professor Tom Rye** from Napier Transport Research Institute and **Richard Darke**, project manager for Essential Edinburgh. More details soon at www.spokes.org.uk.
- Feb 21 **Space for Cycling, Campaigner Training Day**, 10.30-5pm. More info and to book: www.eventbrite.com/e/space-for-cycling-campaigner-training-day-tickets-15199725789 If booking, say you are a spokes member.
- Feb 28 **Spokes Spring mailout and Bulletin 121**. Delivery helpers will be notified nearer the time.

2. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT 2015/16 BUDGET – HOPE!! [**contact your MSPs**]

We have been campaigning hard since the draft budget was published in October. Our detailed investigations showed clearly that, as it stands, total cycling investment in 2015/16 will be down from 14/15, with infrastructure investment suffering particularly badly. This could affect future funding for council projects across Scotland – for example, Edinburgh's planned city centre Roseburn-Leith route. Many members have contacted their MSPs – *thanks if you are one of them!*

The final budget debate and vote are expected on 4 February, and it is clear that the pressure is making the government consider upping their game. If you have not contacted your MSPs recently, the next week or so are crucial.

For the latest hopeful signs *and how you can help* see our Jan 23 news item at www.spokes.org.uk.

3. PLANNING APPLICATIONS *to comment* & PAN EXHIBITIONS *to attend*

Check out our page of cycling-relevant planning proposals every week or two to see if any affect areas where you live, work or otherwise cycle, and for information on how to look them up on the council website.

Find the page at spokes.org.uk : documents : local : current-pas-and-pans

or click this link to go straight there...

www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/current-pas-and-pans/

Two current planning proposals are hugely important, so we summarise them in 4 & 5 below.

4. ST JAMES QUARTER & FUTURE OF LEITH STREET ... Council Ref 14/05263/AMC [object by Jan 30]

Developers already have permission for a massive demolition and redevelopment, called St James Quarter, from York Place to Leith Street. The developers have now submitted for approval the details of how traffic, walking and cycling will be handled in and around the development. Spokes met the developers some months ago, and made some innovative suggestions, some of which to our delight (and surprise) have been included.

However, the plans for **Leith Street** are very disappointing, and we are objecting for that reason. Leith Street will get a segregated cycle route up as far as Calton Road, but nothing at all from there up to Princes Street. Good cycle facilities here are vital for a whole range of reasons, including...

- Picardy Place and the top half of Leith Walk are getting segregated routes, but without a continuation to Princes Street their value is lessened.
- Leith Street is the only sensible cycling connection from the residential and employment opportunities of Leith to Princes Street and to the residential, education and employment areas of south Edinburgh.
- The Council is planning a high-quality east-west cycle route, Roseburn-Leith, with Leith Street as an important option for the section from George St/Princes St to Leith Walk.
- Leith Street will be rebuilt with high quality materials as part of the development. If cycle facilities are not incorporated now it will be costly and disruptive to retro-fit at a later date, which may scupper any future possibility.

If this matters to you, please object to the application on this point. Objections from individuals are really important.

- *If you are short of time* the simplest way to object is to email the council officer in charge, david.givan@edinburgh.gov.uk, saying that you object to planning application 14/05263/AMC, St James Quarter then explaining that your objection relates to the proposals for Leith Street, and why. Please cc or bcc your email to Spokes.
- *If you want full details of the application* (which has over 150 documents!!) and/or *to object using the council's simple online form*, go to the council planning applications page – see (3) above. In order to object with the online form, you will need to register with the site and log in – it is fairly simple.
- *Take further action by emailing your councillors* and asking them to support you. Find them at www.writetothem.com.
- *The Spokes objection* is nearly finalised and by Monday evening should be on our website at <http://www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/leith-walk/>

5. DONALDSONS SCHOOL SITE EAST-WEST PATH ... Council Ref 15/00090/PAN

[exhibition 3 Feb]

New proposals are coming forward to redevelop the above site. This is a PAN, the stage before a planning application, so you submit comments to the developer rather than the council, although you can also speak to your councillors to add weight to your views.

The redevelopment could – and must! - provide an offroad east-west connection between the Roseburn Path and the West End; from Wester Coates Gardens, through the site, to Magdala Cres. ***This is too good an opportunity to miss, so please do submit comments.*** An earlier planning permission for the site did include such a path, thanks to lobbying, but the development never went ahead and so the path was never built.

There is an exhibition 3 Feb, 4-8pm, at Apex Hotel Haymarket. Please go along and leave written comments, or submit comments by email. [Please copy emails to spokes]. If you cannot attend, or wish further info, contact the developers direct... Richard.murphy@richardmurphyarchitects.com, 0131 220 6125.

There will be a second exhibition, taking account of views from the first, on 19 Mar, also 4-8pm at same venue.

6. SCHOOL STREETS CONSULTATION [*consultation underway*]

Edinburgh Council is to experiment with pedestrian/cycle-only zones outside 11 Primary Schools at opening and closing times – i.e. motor traffic will be banned at these times.

The lucky schools are... Abbeyhill, Bonaly, Buckstone, Clermiston, Colinton, Cramond, Duddingston, St John's, Sciennes, St Peter's, Towerbank.

If you are affected - or anyway if you like these plans - fill in the online questionnaire, attend the public drop-ins, and tell your councillors what you think. [Full consultation details here](#).

If you live outside Edinburgh - tell your councillors about the Edinburgh plans and ask them to do similar. NB – East Lothian Council already has a similar experiment [at Haddington schools](#).

7. SATURDAY BUS LANES TO BE SCRAPPED [**contact your councillors**]

We have already highlighted our great dismay at [Edinburgh's plans to allow motor traffic into all bus lanes except in peak hours](#) [plus motorbikes at all times]. Unfortunately the position is worse than we realised - **the proposals also allow all traffic to use all bus lanes all day on Saturdays**.

We cannot understand why the council, whose policies are *succeeding* in raising cycling, bussing and walking, and cutting car use, should suddenly retreat, make cycling conditions more intimidating, pavements noisier and more splashy, and risking Edinburgh's hard-won reputation as a top public-transport city. [For data on Edinburgh's progress see the census links in section 1 [here](#)].

If you don't like what's happening, tell your councillors and, politely but forcefully, ask them to justify their decisions. One member who has done this has had two replies stating that the councillor was not even aware that this was to happen!!

Finally, recently we discovered that **Glasgow** is consulting on *toughening* their bus lane rules so that peak hour bus lanes might become all-day, or even 24/7. If this goes ahead it will make Edinburgh look even worse, so is worth pointing out to your councillor! <http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/transport/glasgow-drivers-face-24-hour-ban-from-all-bus-lanes.116309351>

8. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED [**Can you help?**]

- **D-I-Y-ers** We are in the process of redecorating the room and storage cubby-hole that we rent at St Martins Community Resource Centre (formerly Church), and would welcome a few people who enjoy a bit of DIY. You don't need to be an expert - everything is organised and we just need more helpers! We mainly need people who are available in the day, but there may be one or two weekend sessions and possibly an evening. It is fine if you are only able to come once or twice. If you can help, or for more info, contact judy.cantley@btinternet.com 447 7108.
- **Roadshare/ Presumed Liability** The Roadshare group, which is lobbying for Presumed Liability in Scotland, is keen to have a Spokes rep. You don't need to be any sort of legal expert – the group already has that expertise – but just keen to see Scotland coming into line with the rest of Europe on this important safety measure. The Roadshare website is here... <http://roadshare.co.uk/>. If you are interested, please email DaveduFeu@gmail.com.
- **Bike Breakfast feeder rides organiser** Our annual bike breakfast is likely to be 17 June [date not yet confirmed]. Last year we really missed having someone to coordinate feeder rides from local areas, and so very few happened, unlike in previous years. A website is available to coordinate and publicise local rides, ride leaders etc, so we need a person to look after this and to be in touch with local ride leaders, list local politicians who are joining in, etc.

9. A90 PATH CLOSURE/DIVERSION from Feb 2 for approx 10 weeks

The next phase of the A90 path upgrade affects the route between Barnbogle and Burnshot Wood. This will involve widening and resurfacing the existing path, and installing a safety barrier with 'vaness' to reduce the problem of glare for northbound cyclists.

The Council says, “*a temporary diversion route for pedestrians and cyclists will be available through Dalmeny Estate for the duration of the works. This can be accessed from the main entrance to Dalmeny House at Chapel Gate on the B924 to the north, and the Burnshot flyover to the south. Whilst the path closure is in effect, the diversion will be clearly signed along its full length.*”

Queries: c.smith@edinburgh.gov.uk or phone Callum Smith 0131 469 3592

For the history of the A90 path upgrade project see <http://www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/a90-forth-bridge/>

10. NORTH BRIDGE CYCLING SCULPTURE?? [*ideas by 14 Feb*]

A competition is running to find ideas for the empty plinths on North Bridge. A cycling-related sculpture could be great fun and a good talking point. If you have ideas, enter the competition! Details here... <http://www.summerhall.tv/2014/north-bridge-the-missing-memorials/>

11. FINALLY ...

- Remember to check out our **website** every so often www.spokes.org.uk.
- We have an active **twitter** presence, [@SpokesLothian](https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian). Please look every so often, and RT any tweets you support. The latest Spokes tweets now also appear on our website in the right-hand column.