

Spokes Action Update 26.02.15

... 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. MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2015 – *email renewal option*

Our Spring mailout (with Bulletin 121) will be packaged up on Saturday and delivered from then on. *If you have joined or renewed since October you are already counted as a 2015 member.* Otherwise, you will find a renewal form in your mailout containing the details we currently have for you.

We are working on online joining and renewal, but this is not yet possible. You can renew (as usual) by returning the form to us, with any changes marked on it. However ***if there are no changes to your details*** you can, if you prefer, renew by email - your mailing will include a flyer explaining how to do this and how to donate by BACS or standing order if you prefer that to sending a cheque.

2. GLASGOW DELIVERY – *volunteer needed*

One of our members who lives in Glasgow delivers our envelopes there, but needs them taken to him in Glasgow. Is anyone travelling to Glasgow in the near future, and could collect his pile from Newington Road (Edinburgh) and take it to him at Woodlands Terrace (Glasgow) – it is quite central. If you can help please contact davedufeu AT gmail.com as soon as possible. Someone who could volunteer to do this regularly (3 times a year) would be especially valued!

3. GEORGE STREET FUTURE – *please contact your councillors*

As you may know, the George Street scheme is a 1-year experiment, operating under a Traffic Regulation Order which ends in September. Few people are aware that, unless the Council acts soon, George Street will revert to 2-way traffic (and no cycle lane) in September.

The Council intends to consult in the coming months on various options for the future (we are assured that all options will include segregated cycling of some form or other – possibly like now, or possibly one-way segregated on each side of George Street). However, by the time they have consulted, decided, created the legal orders needed, dealt with objections (using due legal process) and designed the new scheme in detail, it could easily be 12 months after September before anything is implemented.

In other words, we could have many months – perhaps over a year – of the old George Street traffic setup between September and the start of the new layout. Spokes feels this is a disaster. The Council should feel the same as its own surveys show that the public overwhelmingly prefer the current experimental setup to the previous two-way traffic. 72% of respondents found their visit to George St was now 'more enjoyable' and just 1% found it 'less enjoyable'!!

We are urging the Council to maintain the experimental layout until they are ready to install the new one. They say this would be difficult because of legal and practical issues with the Traffic Regulation Orders. We cannot believe that Edinburgh City Council cannot overcome these problems when there is still more than 6 months to run until the existing Order expires.

If you wish George Street to stay as it is now until a new scheme is ready, please email your councillors and ask them to get this sorted. Find them at www.writetothem.com.

4. BUS LANE CUTBACKS - *please contact your councillors*

We are delighted at the level of support there has been for our campaign against the council's proposed cutbacks to bus lane timings. Whether or not we will succeed is unknown – it is a very difficult fight with the Council not wishing to be seen to change its mind – although we know for a fact that many officers in the Transport Department, and a good number of councillors, are worried about the proposal.

The date for formal objections has now passed. We know of many individuals who have formally objected – perhaps 30 or more, in addition to the detailed objections from ourselves, Living Streets (the pedestrians' association) and others. However, it is now really valuable to email your councillors as a report on the objections will be going to the Transport Committee in a few weeks time, at which time a final decision will be taken on whether or not to scrap the scheme.

If you support us and have not yet contacted your councillors, please do so!!

More info/ ideas

- (a) See our Feb 6 news item, which includes links to the Spokes objection and information on other objections, blogs and emails to councillors. <http://www.spokes.org.uk/2015/02/bus-lane-cuts-what-you-say/>
- (b) ***Our main tweet:*** <https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian/status/562902571208437760> If you use twitter, please give us a RT!
- (c) **Speak to your councillors** – ask them to support you and to speak to the Transport Convener.
- (d) **If you belong to an organisation which might be concerned** (e.g. a cycling group, or a school or playgroup who might be concerned about more cars & lorries next to the footway as kids walk home) please draw this to their attention and ask them to speak to councillors. Also, if you know of any organisation which has objected or contacted councillors with concerns, please let us know.

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](#)].

5. 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/

FRONT GARDEN SHEDS – AND GARAGES!

On a related point, as you will be aware, Spokes has done a lot to try and ease the problems for householders who have no alternative for home bike storage except for a bike shed or container in the front garden. See the story so far here...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/2014/01/bike-sheds-need-to-know/>

As you will see, householders have often had great difficulty and distress with enforcement notices to remove sheds or containers, and the stress of appeals etc. Now however we hear of an application to install a **3-car garage in a front garden!!** It will be interesting to see how the Council treats this application. Should you wish to submit your own comments the reference is 15/00453/FUL. For how to look up planning applications (and submit comments) see our planning proposals web page IN (5) above.

6. 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 here... <http://www.spokes.org.uk/2015/01/public-meeting-the-bicycle-in-the-city-centre/>
- June 15 **Bike-Rail Public Meeting** Unusually, we are having a Summer public meeting in addition to our usual autumn and spring ones. The main speaker will be John Dietz from Abellio, the Dutch company which takes over ScotRail in April. There will also be 2 or 3 other speakers on local bike-rail issues, followed by QA and panel discussion. Our meeting has been timed to be part of Edinburgh Festival of Cycling. www.edfoc.org.uk/events/event/spokes-public-meeting-on-bikerail/ More details nearer the time.
- April 25 **Pedal on Parliament 2015** <http://pedalonparliament.org/> Flyers are now available – contact the organisers if you can help distribute them. One flyer will be included to all Spokes member households in the forthcoming mailout.

7. FOUNTAINBRIDGE CANALSIDE – meeting 4 March

If you are interested in the future of this area – including aspects such as the Community Garden and future developments, not just the towpath – consider going to the Fountainbridge Canalside Initiative public meeting on Weds 4 March, 6-8pm at Kings Church, Gilmore Place. The main speaker will be Malcolm Fraser, Edinburgh architect, regular cyclist, and author of the Scottish Government's town centres review. More info from stan.reeves1 [AT] btinternet.com. The group also welcomes new members – this could be useful to provide input on towpath issues.

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

Bike Breakfast feeder rides organiser Our annual bike breakfast will be 17 June. Last year we really missed having someone to coordinate feeder rides from local areas, and therefore 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. 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.