

Spokes Action Update 18.04.15

... 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. SATURDAY 25 APRIL, 12 NOON, MEADOWS – PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT

We need hardly remind you, but this is a really important date! Despite the election a few days later, many politicians are again coming along, and speakers include new Transport Minister **Derek Mackay MSP** – who early indications suggest may turn out to be our most cycle-friendly SNP Transport Minister yet [but time will tell!] *Do take the chance to speak to some of the politicians* – there will be spaces set aside for this at the end of the ride. Here's a list of those expected so far... <http://pedalonparliament.org/meet-the-politicians-2015/>

Full details of the event at ... <http://pedalonparliament.org/>

We still have a few 100 of the current Spokes bulletin, no. 121. We'd like 2 or 3 people to come along to the Spokes stall at the Meadows by 11.30 to take a pile and walk along the queue offering them to anyone interested. Please email Spokes if you can offer, so we can make sure to bring enough.

2. GENERAL ELECTION 2015

Since nearly all responsibility for cycling lies with the Scottish Government, we haven't organised hustings, candidate surveys, etc. Of course the occasional issue does arise where MPs can play an important role – such as the current [Fortress Waverley](#) dispute, given that Waverley station is run by UK Network Rail not ScotRail.

However we do have a website article <http://www.spokes.org.uk/2015/04/general-election-2015/>. It tells you...

- ◆ **Which candidates are Spokes members** – there are 5, all of whom are longstanding members, and all of whom have been active on cycling or cycling-related issues. When we searched the spokes website, we were pleased to find that all 5 names appeared in one article or another from recent years! The above article gives these links.
- ◆ **Hustings dates** - please check this out urgently as there are lots of hustings for different constituencies in the coming week, from Monday onwards
- ◆ **Links to useful sites** about the election.

We've tweeted the article ... <https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian/status/586472167220637696>

If you use twitter please give us a RT.

3. NEW MIDLOTHIAN MAP

Our 2015 4th-edition Midlothian map is now out...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/2015/04/spokes-midlothian-2015-map/>

If you use twitter please give the map a RT here ...

<https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian/status/587335160640704512>

We have about 80 copies of our 3rd edition Midlothian map left and we are trying something new by offering them free to schools in Midlothian if any would find them useful for Geography or other classes. If this works well we may do the same in future when new editions of our other maps are published.

4. SPOKES OFFICE

We are extremely grateful to everyone who responded to our request for volunteers to redecorate the Spokes office - especially Judy Cantley who coordinated the work and Bob Allen from St Martins Centre. The room is now nearly finished and looking great. The volunteers, in addition to Judy and Bob, are... Goff Cantley, John Wilkinson, Martyn Edelsten, Tim Smith, Laurence Smythe, Rosanna Rabaeijs and Alec Mann.

5. OLD STOCK GOING FREE(ISH)

We are clearing out various items and are pleased to offer them free (or for a voluntary donation) to any Spokes members who might find them useful.

To request anything please contact judy.cantley [AT] btinternet.com or phone 0131 447 7108. Please reply by Sunday 26 April, after which Judy will split things up as fairly as possible amongst any requests. If you have a special reason for requesting something [e.g. for a library or school] rather than purely for personal interest please say. Requests after that date will be met if the items remain.

Source	Title	Available
Spokes [Also see * below]	Set of Spokes Bulletins 1979-present. A few issues missing, but if requested for a library we will be as complete as possible.	Plenty sets
Spokes	envelope re-use labels (4 per sheet - in sets of 10 sheets)	lots
Spokes	Edinburgh Cycle map (1st edition)	10
	Edinburgh Cycle map (2nd edition 1991)	2
	Edinburgh Cycle map (3rd edition)	13
	Edinburgh Cycle map (4th edition 1996)	1
	Edinburgh Cycle map (5th edition)	2
Sustrans	NCN Guidelines and Practical details (March 1997)	2
Encyclopedia	Guide to Cycling alternatives (thick glossy book of different types of bikes, trailers, etc, published 2001)	3
Velocity conference	CD Rom 2001 Edinburgh/Glasgow conf proceedings	6
Scottish Rights of Way Society (now Scotways)	Scottish Hilltracks map 1999	lots

* The front covers of all Bulletins from no.1 to no.100 are scanned online [here](#) thanks to Chris Hill, founder of [CityCyclingEdinburgh](#) online forum. Complete bulletin pdf's from no.89 to the present are [on our website](#).

6. BIKES ON TRAMS

If you have been a Spokes member for some time, you will remember that we campaigned over several years in the early days of tram planning, to get bikes allowed on the trams. It was very difficult, with many setbacks along the way, because this would be a first for the UK and the tram bosses really didn't want the hassle – a genuine hassle as they have to keep in line with national regulators who are also wary of anything new to the UK. As always, our case was helped greatly by many individual Spokes members at the time who contacted councillors in support, pointing out that bike carriage is commonplace in US and European systems.

However, unlike our failed efforts with the more important issue of onroad tramline layouts, we did eventually succeed and were promised a trial of carrying bikes offpeak once the trams had bedded in, with a view to becoming permanent if it works well.

We understand that the trial is likely to begin soon, will be closely monitored for the first month or two, and is likely to become permanent if no serious problems arise. We'll let members know when the trial begins.

During the trial period please make the maximum effort to ensure things go smoothly. This is not just an Edinburgh issue – campaign groups in Manchester, Sheffield and elsewhere have been arguing unsuccessfully about this for years. They are looking to us for a precedent which will help them.

For example if a tram guard says the tram is too full and asks you to wait for the next one, please do so with a smile rather than an argument; or if people are standing in the (shared) bike area please be maximum polite, or even offer to wait for the next tram (usually just 10 minutes). Once the trial is over, you can return to being 'ordinary polite' (!) but for the first couple of months 'maximum polite' might make all the difference.

7. BUS LANE CUTBACKS [**contact your councillors**]

Awareness is growing over the Council plans to scrap Saturday bus lanes and cut the all-day weekday lanes to peak-hour only. Because this affects pedestrians as much as cyclists we teamed up with **Living Streets**, who along with **Greener Leith** and **FOE (Scotland)** jointly signed our formal objection. As a result of our publicity we believe that 30 or more individuals also lodged objections to the draft Order.

Glasgow City has just reviewed its bus lane timings. Like Edinburgh it wished to rationalise timings. However, instead of cutting back, it is toughening the rules – a **7-7-7 decision** that all bus lanes will operate 7 days a week from 7am-7pm. Furthermore, unlike Edinburgh who only undertook minimal consultation, Glasgow consulted widely before taking its decision, and the feedback strongly supported 7-7-7 or even 24-7.

Useful links for more info...

- (a) **Our objection:** <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/1501-Bus-lane-TROs-objection-v5-final.pdf>
- (b) **Website article:** <http://www.spokes.org.uk/2015/02/awareness-grows-on-bus-lane-cutbacks/>
- (c) **Our main tweet:** <https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian/status/562902571208437760>
- (d) **The Glasgow report:** <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/councillorsandcommittees/submissiondocuments.asp?submissionid=73931>

A decision will be made at Edinburgh Transport Committee on 2 June. You can help now...

- **Speak to your councillors** – ask them to support you and to speak to the Transport Convener. We have already had some interesting feedback as a result of members doing this – see (b) above.
- **If you use twitter** see (c) above and give us a RT.
- **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 raise it with councillors!

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](#)].

8. GOGAR ROUNDABOUT A8 UNDERPASS [**contact councillors & MSPs**]

Network Rail, with Scottish Government money, is building a new station and tram interchange on the north side of the A8, on the Edinburgh side of gogar roundabout – it will include a pedestrian underpass of the very scary A8, enabling walkers from Gyle etc to avoid the crossing the A8, and providing access not just to the station but also to the 'International Business Gateway' development planned beyond the station. When the station plans came out (in 2009) [we argued strongly](#) that the underpass should be joint pedestrian/ cycle. Despite objections from ourselves and around 20 individuals we were shocked to find that the plans went through unaltered. We have raised the matter several times since, to no avail.

However, having just raised it yet again, when the Transport Minister came to the Parliament All-Party cycling group, we have been told there are "*ongoing discussions (between Transport Scotland, Network Rail, ScotRail and Edinburgh City) around the future operation and management of the underpass, including options for mixed pedestrian-cycle access.*" What this means is unclear – whether it means hope for genuine shared use, or rules for dismounting, is not clear – but it is the first time we have a hint of the issue being taken seriously.

If this concerns you please contact your Councillors and/or MSPs. Tell them how important this is to you, that you are aware of ongoing discussions involving the Council, Transport Scotland and Network Rail, and urging them to press for full cycle access through the A8 underpass and beyond to the new Gogar Station and the International Business Gateway. **Send us any useful replies.**

9. EDINBURGH CITY-WIDE 20MPH

The Council is currently preparing the draft order to implement its 20mph proposals, which we reported here... <http://www.spokes.org.uk/2015/02/20-cheers-for-edinburgh/>

Because the Scottish Government will not agree to 20mph being a default urban limit the Order has to specify every single street affected – roughly 2500 streets we think!! Spokes is sending in a few suggestions of streets which are to remain 30mph but which we feel should be 20mph – it is unlikely there will be changes at this stage, but it is worth a try. **If you have suggestions** to be included, please email Peter Hawkins, peterhawk [AT] phoncoop.coop by 24 April. When the Order finally is published it will undoubtedly attract many objections, and at that stage the top priority will be to support it (as a huge first step).

10. A90 CYCLEROUTE TO FORTH BRIDGE

Work on the difficult section between Burnshot Wood and Barnougle Gate is almost complete, and the route is expected to reopen before the end of April. The new path will have 'vanes' to deal with the glare from car headlights, which is a particular problem here. [or 'veins' beside this 'arterial' road, as someone put it!]

For picture of the work in progress, see this tweet from Sustrans Scotland... <https://twitter.com/SustransScot/status/583589764516970496>

11. 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/

For once, there are few significant proposals (at the time of writing)!

12. FOR YOUR DIARY – more June details on our website soon, but note the dates

- *May 3 Sustran Megacycle* [Penicuik-Musselburgh fun and charity ride](#).
- *June 15 Bike/Rail Integration - Spokes Summer Public Meeting*. Headline speaker – **John Dietz**, Abellio, new Dutch operators of ScotRail. Also speakers from **Sustran** (the Regional Transport body), **Campaign for Borders Rail** (including concern re bike spaces) and **Transform Scotland** (research on cycle/walk access to stations throughout Scotland).
- *June 17 Spokes Bike Breakfast*, 7.45-9.45, City Chambers, High Street. **Helper needed** (with slight technical savvy) - Last year we really missed having someone to coordinate feeder rides from local areas, so, unlike previous years, very few happened. 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.
- *June 11-21 Edinburgh Festival of Cycling* – all members will get a printed programme in their mailing in late May, but find out more online at www.edfoc.org.uk. Our two events above are part of the fantastic and amazingly diverse EdFoC programme.

13. 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.