

# Spokes Action Update 02.04.16

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... 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.

... **Please check below carefully for everything that concerns you, then follow it up.**

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## SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT ELECTION, 5 MAY 2016

**Spokes urges all members to help raise the profile of cycling and of transport in the run up to the election. In particular, you can help by contacting your candidates and by attending hustings.**

- ◆ See the [Election article](#) on our website
- ◆ If you use twitter, retweet [our tweet](#) advertising the article
- ◆ Check out [election hustings](#) to see which you can attend
- ◆ Perhaps most important, contact your candidates, as follows...
  - ◆ The [WalkCycleVote campaign](#), which Spokes supports, has done a fantastic job identifying election candidates – and their contact details - for all constituency and regional seats in Scotland. There's more about WCV's campaign [here](#). In particular, WCV has tried to contact all candidates, asking them for their views on 3 crucial questions...
    - Sustained, long term investment in cycling and walking, reaching 10% of the transport budget by the end of the new Parliament [for the 16/17 financial year it is just 1.9% - see our [post-budget article](#)]
    - Dedicated cycling infrastructure, enabling people aged 8-80 to cycle.
    - Safer roads for both walking and cycling

### CONTACTING YOUR CANDIDATES

- Check out your own candidates (and their contact details) using the WCV ['Find Candidates'](#) facility.
- Ask them whatever questions particularly concern you, but we suggest one or more of the following. However it's best not to send a long email, just 2 or 3 main points and a few sentences about why this matters to you and your friends or family.
- If you notice that they have not yet replied to WCV, ask them to do so, so that you and others can see their replies
- Bike/Rail – will they take any actions **now** and after the election to try and ensure that the new and refurbished rolling stock for the Edinburgh-Glasgow and West Highland lines will have at least as much bike capacity as now, and preferably more. See [our story](#) and [our tweet](#) - which has now been retweeted an incredible 170 times by concerned individuals and organisations, including many from the West Highlands.
- Local issues – the election is for the Scottish Parliament, but note that costly Council cycleroute projects, such as the very exciting proposed Roseburn-Canal and East-West routes can only happen with 50/50 matched funds from the Scottish Government (via Sustrans). Increasing government cycling investment is crucial to such projects, so say how important they are to you.

## OTHER NEWS / EVENTS / THINGS TO DO

- ◆ Sat 23 April **Pedal on Parliament 2016** Info: <http://pedalonparliament.org> Being just before the election, it's important for as many people as possible to come along. But don't let your attendance be an excuse for not also contacting your election candidates!!
  - If you feel like coming with other people, join [your local feeder ride](#).
  - Spokes will need help on the day handing out copies of the Spring Spokes Bulletin.
- ◆ The Spokes '**My Favourite Bike Ride**' booklet based on our 2015 competition will be out this week! Look out for mentions in the media. All members will be sent a copy in the summer mailout in late May. Other ways of getting the booklet are on our [rides web page](#). Our thanks to all the contributors and to those who worked so hard to get this excellent booklet together.
- ◆ The Scottish Government is consulting on **cutting Air Passenger Duty** by 50%, a move [strongly opposed by environmental groups](#). Quite apart from the main argument – the impact on carbon emissions – this will reduce the government's income by £125m a year, a sum which could be used to treble the £40m a year which the government currently allocates to walking and cycling combined. If this concerns you, please [respond to the consultation](#).
- ◆ Our Spring Bulletin (Spokes 124) advertised Prof Chris Oliver's 3-week free **#GetActive MOOC** Edinburgh University [online course](#) in which you learn about – and do something about! - sedentariness and lack of physical activity. Chris tells us that an incredible 13,000 people are now signed up for the course. Could it be a coincidence that we printed 13,000 copies of the Bulletin?? There's still time to sign up!

## FINALLY

- ◆ Remember to check out our **website** every so often [www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk).
- ◆ We are active on **Twitter**, [@SpokesLothian](#). Please follow us and RT tweets you support. Check our 'favourites' for important or interesting tweets. Recent Spokes tweets also appear on our website.
- ◆ If you use **Facebook**, please like, share, etc the [Spokes Facebook page](#). We hope soon to restart the automatic twitter feed to Facebook.