

Spokes Action Update 17.08.16

... 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.**

1. East West Central Edinburgh Cycle Route: Decision Time – ***please contact your councillors now***

The 30 August meeting of the Council's Transport and Environment Committee will consider the proposals for an [East-West cycle route from Roseburn to Leith Walk](#) across Edinburgh city centre – a largely segregated onroad route, and easily the most important cycleroute proposal in Edinburgh so far.

We don't yet know what will be in the Committee Report, but SPOKES strongly supported the original proposals [consulted on early this year](#) and [we made suggestions](#) for possible improvements. Overall, some 67% of consultees strongly supported the proposals, but there has been vocal opposition in Roseburn area. However, there is also a local support group, with an excellent evidence-based website, www.roseburncycleroute.org.uk.

There were legitimate concerns by local shopkeepers to ensure sufficient space for loading, and so the Council recently consulted on 2 revised options for Roseburn. SPOKES strongly supports option A, which retains the direct route through Roseburn. The rather clumsy alternative option B would require cyclists to cross a number of main roads and then use a back route. As well as being better for cyclists and providing space for loading, option A also gives improvements for pedestrians.

The east-west cycleroute, if it goes ahead, will be the largest and most important investment in new cycling infrastructure by the Council to date...

- ◆ It includes significant sections of segregated on road cycle lane, protected from motor traffic
- ◆ It will enable safe cycling across the city centre, linking into existing routes in the west of Edinburgh, the north Edinburgh cycle network and the planned segregated cycle lanes in Leith Walk
- ◆ It can in future be developed further, extending south and east of the city centre, and west along the A8
- ◆ **In short it is a game changer for cycling in Edinburgh and could attract many new people to use bikes for day to day travel, including commuting, shopping and leisure visits.**

It is essential that we lobby hard to support the Council's proposals...

- ◆ across the city centre as a whole
- ◆ and for option A in the Roseburn area.

If you support the route, we urge you to [contact your own councillors now](#) - and certainly before the 30 August meeting. Ask your councillor to support the route if they are on the Transport Committee, and, if they are not, to speak in support of the project to the Convenor, Councillor Lesley Hinds. Please write in your own words rather than copying chunks from our text.

If you'd like to read more, the 3 blogs below by various concerned Spokes members contain some excellent points as to why this project demands our strong support.

<https://hankchiefblog.wordpress.com/2016/08/12/conviction-needed/>

<http://pedalonparliament.org/the-roseburn-leith-cycle-path-a-safer-route-to-roseburn-primary-school/>

<http://wadler.blogspot.co.uk/2016/08/roseburn-to-leith-walk-vs-b-time-to-act.html>

And here's [our document](#) showing why a whole variety of different local cycling organisations, representing everyone from the new or the nervous to the most experienced, will use and will support the route.

2. Shopping by Bike – Spokes 2016 competition – *please enter!!*

Our summer competition closes on 5th September – please enter soon!! There are great prizes – see below - including several new ones and some that will help you shop by bike. By entering you also help Spokes – we'll be able to publicise a whole variety of ideas and experiences for other people to emulate – or not to!!

Download the entry form and full instructions here [in [Word](#) or [pdf](#)]. For more about the competition, see our [website article](#).

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| ◆ <i>ScotRail</i> | Return for 2 people between any 2 Scottish stations |
| ◆ <i>Edinburgh Bicycle Coop</i> | Revolution waterproof panniers – great for shopping |
| ◆ <i>Sustrans</i> | Complete set of Scotland 'Pocket Cycle Map' series |
| ◆ <i>Biketrax</i> | £30 voucher |
| ◆ <i>Laidback Bikes</i> | Recumbent tour – NEW PRIZE THIS YEAR |
| ◆ <i>Filmhouse</i> | Tickets for 2 |
| ◆ <i>Camera Obscura & World of Illusions</i> | Family day ticket [2] |
| ◆ <i>Craigie's Farm & Deli</i> | £30 hamper + £10 voucher – NEW PRIZE THIS YEAR |
| ◆ <i>Ed Festival of Cycling</i> | Day hire of Urban Arrow cargobike – NEW PRIZE THIS YEAR |
| ◆ <i>Kalpna</i> | Indian Vegetarian Restaurant, lunch for 2 people |

3. Quick Brexit chance to boost cycling investment – *email your MSPs*

The First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, [has announced](#) £100m capital investment "to support and stimulate the economy in the wake of the EU referendum." The cash, which is actually underspending from last year rather than new money, is the first stage of a programme which will run into future years.

Spokes has written to the First Minister pointing out that cycling infrastructure would be a highly effective use for some of this investment. In our letter we point out why cycling infrastructure fits perfectly with the criteria which the government has listed for the cash - *"Projects will be assessed for accelerated funding against a range of criteria including how quickly work can start, the number of jobs that will be supported or created, the likely impact on the supply chain and geographic spread."*

We suggested that the cash should go to the [Sustrans Community Links scheme](#) – whereby Councils and others can apply for 50/50 funding for cycling infrastructure. For example, Edinburgh applies to this scheme for projects such as the east-west route and Canal-Meadows-Innocent. Sustrans already has a list of project bids which have been assessed as suitable for funding, but does not have sufficient cash in the fund.

Our letter has been supported by Spokes member [Alison Johnstone MSP](#) who has lodged [the motion below](#)...which is also supported by Lothians MSP [Neil Findlay](#) and several other MSPs from further afield.

Investment in Infrastructure to Boost Cycling and Walking

That the Parliament notes the recent announcement of £100 million for capital investment projects by the First Minister; acknowledges the call from Spokes, the Lothian cycle campaign, that a proportion of the funding should go toward capital investment in infrastructure to boost cycling and walking as a means of everyday travel; considers that a simple and effective way of doing this would be to provide a significant funding boost to Sustrans Community Links schemes; further considers that such investment would help the Scottish Government to get closer to its target of 10% of everyday journeys being made by bike by 2020; believes that investment in walking and cycling is essential in tackling the considerable climate change, public health and air quality challenges that are faced, and calls on the Scottish Government to make such investment a priority.

Supported by: Maree Todd, Patrick Harvie, Neil Findlay, John Finnie

Please help - [contact your MSPs](#). Ask them to speak to the First Minister and to Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for the Economy, and make the case for Brexit cash to be used for cycling infrastructure. Send us any useful replies. Of course, the government needs a decent regular cycling budget (like Edinburgh's 10% of the transport budget) but whilst it remains at under 2% we need to seize every opportunity like this for one-off boosts to investment.

More background – see our [website article](#).

4. Netherlands Infrastructure Study-tour, Sep 13-15

It's still not too late to book in for the highly-recommended David Hembrow study tour being organised by Glasgow campaign group Go-Bike, supported by Spokes. Full details [here](#).

5. On-Street Bike Storage – Aug 30 decision – *contact your councillors*

Whilst the August 30th Edinburgh Council Transport Cttee is likely to be dominated by decisions on the East-West cycleroute (item 1 above) we are also expecting a report on another crucial long-term issue – the future (or not!) of the Council's plans for [secure overnight onstreet bike storage](#). This is vital, as there is evidence that difficulties in storing a bike reduce bike ownership and use in central Edinburgh, particularly in tenement areas.

[The Council has run a pilot since 2014](#), with 3 types of secure storage units in various streets. We understand this has been [very successful](#), and there is a long waiting list of people and streets wanting more installations. Meanwhile onstreet bike storage is now happening on [a massive scale in parts of London](#).

However there is a rumour that Edinburgh may retreat on its intention, and give up entirely or only go for a slow implementation and with high rentals. We stress that this is only a rumour – we don't know for sure what will be in the Council report on the 30th.

Please help as follows...

- ◆ **Contact your councillors** - ask them to speak to Transport Convenor Cllr Lesley Hinds and to press for a proper roll-out of onstreet bike storage, as in London. Send us any useful replies.
- ◆ The report for the August 30th Committee will come out a few days in advance. If it is disappointing it would be useful to organise a deputation, but it may not be easy for us to do this as we are already organising one for the east-west route. **If you are affected and would like to lead or be on a deputation, should one prove necessary, please contact Spokes asap.** You would need to be free on the morning of Tuesday 30 August.

6. 'Bike Alert' – Motorist awareness campaign – *helpers needed*

Spokes is taking part in driving awareness events for 6th-formers by West, East and Midlothian Councils. [We would like to do the same at the Edinburgh 6th-former events, but so far have not been offered a sufficient time slot for it to be worth sending volunteers to do this]. We will be using the ['Bike Alert' video and leaflet](#) prepared by Spokes thanks to a donation in memory of Audrey Fyfe who was killed whilst cycling in Edinburgh.

The sessions are Sep 28 - Oct 1 and **we need volunteers** who feel competent at this and who can be there for a whole or at least half day. To find out more as to what is involved and how you can help, please contact Spokes.

7. Love to Ride – September challenges for workplaces & individuals

West Lothian and Edinburgh councils are running the Love to Ride scheme throughout September – the aim being to get the maximum number of people using a bike during the month – even if they only cycle for 5 minutes! You can enter as an individual, or as part of a workplace group or other group, and there is a wide range of prizes (for individuals and for groups) from cinema tickets to a new bike. For more info and to register for the challenge, click on [Edinburgh](#) or [West Lothian](#). It is all part of a [UK-wide challenge](#), so even if your council is not promoting the challenge, you can still join in.

8. More events...

- ◆ Aug 20, [Take One Action bike-powered cinema](#), Princes St Gardens, starts 11a.m. with bike-related films later in the day, plus 4.30pm panel discussion including Spokes, Pedal on Parliament and Living Streets.
- ◆ Aug 27 We hope to have a spokes stall at a family event at Tiso's shop in Commercial St, Leith. We'll need volunteers – if you can help please contact martyn.edelsten@ed.ac.uk.
- ◆ More events – see the events column on left side of [Spokes website](#).

9. Edinburgh Council consultations relevant to cycling

- ◆ [McDonald Road](#) – closes 4 September
- ◆ [Niddrie-Moredun-Gilmerton](#) – closes 4 September
- ◆ [Use of public space](#) – closes 6 September [for example, you could mention the need to maintain cycling and walking routes when appropriate, such as George St during the Festival]

10. Important Retweets!!

If you use twitter, please consider retweeting any of the following important recent Spokes tweets...

- ◆ [Netherlands study tour](#)
- ◆ [Brexit cash](#)
- ◆ [Spokes Shopping by Bike competition](#) + various tweets about prizes, [for example](#)
- ◆ [Air Passenger Duty – consultation results](#)
- ◆ [New Spokes Edinburgh map](#)
- ◆ [Garden bike sheds – getting closer??](#)
- ◆ [Onstreet secure bike storage](#)

FINALLY

- ◆ Remember to check out our **website** every so often 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.

Dave du Feu, Spokes 17 August 2016