

Spokes Action Update 03.12.16

... 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.**

DATES COMING SOON...

- ◆ **Dec 6 & 7** – Sheriffhall roundabout exhibition/consultation - see 4 below
- ◆ **Immediate** – North Edinburgh Cycleroute Network, improvements consultation – see 3 below
- ◆ **Dec 9** - Meadows to Castle Terrace consultation ends – see 3 below
- ◆ **Dec 9** - Inverleith Place to Goldenacre path consultation ends – see 3 below
- ◆ **Dec 10** – Spokes stall at Farmers' Market – see 8 below
- ◆ **Dec 13** – West Lothian Quiet Roads consultation ends – see 4 below.

1. Council Elections – *please help influence manifestos!*

Council elections take place across Scotland on 4 May 2017. It is vital that Edinburgh retains its policy of allocating 10% of the transport budget to cycling – this is now beginning to show through in facilities on the ground, and we can expect a lot more if it continues. *You* can help make sure it continues!!

WHAT YOU CAN DO ...

We have contacted the main political parties in Edinburgh, asking how members of the public can send ideas for their election manifesto. The **Conservatives** and **SNP** have given us email addresses where individuals can send ideas. The **Greens** have set up a pre-budget online survey, with several questions where comments about cycling and transport would fit well. **Labour** has issued a draft manifesto and have an online page where you can submit comments – page 5 of the draft already includes the 10% budget promise! - it's worth praising that, so it remains. We are still awaiting the **LibDem** contact but will add it to our website article as soon as we get it.

Please do comment to the parties - go to our website article [here](#), where you can find full details, website links and email addresses.

WHAT SPOKES HAS DONE ALREADY...

Spokes has written to the 5 party leaders on Edinburgh City Council with 3 top requests for manifestos, namely...

- ◆ Maintain the allocation of 10% of the transport budget (capital and revenue) to cycling
- ◆ Give high priority to protected and direct main road cycleroutes, including the east-west route
- ◆ Transform Princes Street into a cycle- and pedestrian-friendly place

See our letter [here](#). Of course, when you respond to the political parties above, feel free to make the points that *you* consider most important, not necessarily what is in the Spokes letter. Generally it is better to make 2 or 3 points that you consider really important, rather than a long list.

2. Tell us your successes! (and get more)

Have you as an individual taken up a local cycling issue, large or small, that affected you personally – for example by contacting your councillor, or reporting on the council website – and achieved success? We know several examples but would like to hear more, for a possible Bulletin article at some point. If so, send brief details to updates@spokes.org.uk. Also a photo if you have one, but don't worry if not.

Incidentally, many people email their councillors about cycling issues, but not many go along to have a chat at a councillor surgery and explain the issues that concern you in your local area. That can be really worthwhile, so why not have a go? [Contact your councillors](#) to ask for their surgery time and place.

3. Edinburgh Consultations – *please make your views known*

- ◆ ***Closed, but email comments still possible*** [North Edinburgh Cyclerooute Network](#) This consultation seeks ideas for a wide range of minor upgrades, e.g. accesses, surface, lighting, vegetation, drainage. If you have suggestions for improvements please email martyn.lings@edinburgh.gov.uk and say this is belated comment for the North Edinburgh Path Network consultation.
- ◆ ***Closes 9.12.16*** [InverleithRow-Goldenacre](#) (part of Quiet Route QR20) Spokes Planning Group has not yet finalised their comments, but we may argue to retain the existing route along Inverleith Terrace / Eildon Street rather than along Inverleith Place / Warriston Gardens.
- ◆ ***Closes 9.12.16*** [Meadows-CastleTerrace](#) (part of Quiet Route QR6) A partially segregated route via Lady Lawson St & Grindlay St, with a pedestrian/cycle Lothian Rd crossing near Usher Hall - a welcome and major scheme with some long-promised features. However, our Planning Group has concerns about several aspects. One point is that we would like a much more pedestrian/cycle-friendly **Lothian Road crossing** - a single stage crossing between Festival Square and the Usher Hall plaza rather than a central guardrailed 'pen.' Please do send your own concerns to the Council and if possible send us a copy.
- ◆ ***Closes 31.12.16*** [Southside Place Standard](#) A council online survey – what's good and not so good about the Southside – for living, working, shopping, getting about.
- ◆ ***For more or new consultations...*** see [Edinburgh Council Consultation Hub](#).

4. Lothians Consultations – *please make your views known*

- ◆ ***Exhibition Dec 6 -7*** [Sheriffhall Roundabout](#) grade-separation proposals. Since this is a trunk road it is the responsibility of Transport Scotland (i.e. the Scottish Government) rather than Midlothian or Edinburgh councils. Transport Scotland is working on various options for installing a grade-separated junction. An [earlier report](#) gives details of 8 options, and the news release above suggests these have now been narrowed down to (we think) options 1, 6 and 8. Some of these options include removing the slips at the Gilmerton Road junction, which (if we read the plans correctly) would allow cyclists to **cross the bypass at a simple bridge instead of busy junctions**. Whilst that sounds like great news, the public consultation arrangements are rather the opposite...

The news release above says there will be an exhibition of the current options at Sheriffhall Park & Ride Terminal Building, A7 Old Dalkeith Road, Danderhall EH22 1FF on Tues 6 and Weds 7 December.

Shockingly, it doesn't give *the times* of the exhibition or any *contact details* !! We emailed Transport Scotland's info desk early on Thursday and there is still no reply. However one of our members thinks the exhibitions are open 12-7pm on both days.

For anyone who cannot attend the exhibition but wishes to comment, one option is to use their general email address, info@transport.gov.uk and ask them to pass your email to the section dealing with this project (but don't expect a quick response!) Alternatively, and perhaps better, try [emailing your MSP\(s\)](#) and ask them to get a reply for you from Transport Scotland.

- ◆ ***Closes 13 December*** [West Lothian Quiet Roads consultation](#) The main aim is to identify rural roads to be designated as 'quiet roads' with reduced speed limits and gateway signage –an approach already used in Clackmannanshire and Perth & Kinross.

Even if you don't know West Lothian, it's worth having a look at this - and if you live in or visit West Lothian it's even more important!! The consultation website is a great example of using online mapping to gather ideas/suggestions on improving roads and paths. It includes a traditional survey *plus* a map on which you can enter comments – and see (and add to) comments made by other people.

- ◆ ***Closes 16 December*** [East Lothian Air Quality draft action plan](#) Nitrogen dioxide in Musselburgh is now above acceptable levels. We are not sure whether other towns have also been tested, or are ok.
- ◆ ***Closes 6 Jan*** [East Lothian budget consultation](#) Your chance to argue for better cycle funding.
- ◆ ***Check for more or newer Lothians consultations at...***

- www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk
- www.midlothian.gov.uk/consultation/open
- www.westlothian.gov.uk/consultations

5. Bus Lane cutbacks

Last year we mounted a big campaign against the proposal to cut back on bus lane hours, including the complete scrapping of bus lanes on Saturdays. Despite **150 individual objections** the Transport Committee went ahead with a trial. Then, last month, the Committee decided (with only the 2 Green councillors objecting) to **make the experiment permanent** - a **joint letter from Spokes and Living Streets** had no effect.

The Council has now issued the legal order to make the experiment permanent. Unfortunately the Committee has powers to over-rule objections to this type of Order. Spokes will object but, given the previous decisions, our objection is 99.9% certain to be over-ruled, and so there are more important ways that we can use our time than to mount a large campaign again.

Nonetheless, if you are concerned please do object formally and/or email your councillors to express your feelings. The Order is **here** (TRO/16/87B). There is also **another Order** (TRO/16/87A) to make permanent allowing motorcycles in bus lanes.

You can object to either or both Orders (or request further information) by emailing **trafficorders@edinburgh.gov.uk**. Please quote the reference number of the Order(s) to which you are objecting.

6. George Street Christmas bike lane

After the disastrous 'bike lane' provided during Edinburgh Festival, little more than 30cm wide in places, and with the feet of metal barriers protruding into the lane, two members of Spokes Planning Group have spent a lot of time attending meetings with the Council and the Street of Light organisers. We think the new arrangements are a big improvement on the Festival ones, though the Street of Light obviously means some disruption is unavoidable, and it is necessary to walk during the two short performances each evening.

We have also been talking about provision at future events – and we are, of course, awaiting the Council's plans for the future permanent layout of George Street, which will probably need a further reconsideration of what happens during George Street festivities.

7. Bike Station Fire

As you will know from our **October 19 circular**, the Bike Station has been devastated by fire, and the result is made worse by the fact that asbestos has been exposed. They have now set up a crowd-funding appeal.

Click **here** to find out more, see how they are going, and add your own donation!

If you're on twitter, **give them a RT** too.

8. For your diary

- ◆ *Dec 10 – Spokes stall at the Farmers' Market* Castle Terrace, a.m.
- ◆ *Dec 24 – Christmas* – why not buy someone a Spokes Map for Christmas?? Our new Edinburgh map is snow-resistant! (well, water-resistant). **Order by post** or at bike shops (not all) or get them at special stall prices at our Farmers' Market stall above. If you're ordering 6 or more of the same map, there's an even better **bulk price**.
- ◆ *April 6 – Spokes Hustings for the Council elections*
- ◆ *May 4 – Council elections* (all councils in Scotland)
- ◆ *More events* – see the events column on left side of **Spokes website**.

9. Important tweets – *please retweet!!*

If you use twitter, please consider retweeting any of these important or interesting recent Spokes tweets...

- ◆ [Visit the Roseburn shops](#) [by bike!]
- ◆ [How to influence party manifestos](#)
- ◆ [Spokes Bulletin 126](#)
- ◆ [Spokes November traffic count](#)
- ◆ [Business and Cycling – report of Spokes public meeting](#)
- ◆ [Scottish Budget – how is it prioritised?](#)
- ◆ [Onstreet secure bike storage to go ahead](#)
- ◆ [Spokes presents Bike Alert video & leaflet to 4000 6th-year students](#)
- ◆ [Brief Edinburgh cycle campaigning history](#)
- ◆ [How to report fumes from lorries or buses](#)

FINALLY – *help Spokes and keep in touch*

- ◆ Remember to check out our **website** every so often www.spokes.org.uk.
- ◆ We are active on **Twitter**, [@SpokesLothian](https://twitter.com/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.
- ◆ The **Spokes Bulletin** is one of our main means of spreading knowledge of Spokes, of what is happening in cycling development, and how people can help. Can you use a supply (large or small) to leaflet bikes at your workplace or on bikes parked around any areas of the city [not Haymarket or Waverley which we already cover] – or would your local cafe, barber, etc like 5 or 10 copies? If you'd like a supply of the current bulletin, and/or if you'd like a regular supply of future copies, email updates@spokes.org.uk.