

# Spokes Action Update 30.12.16

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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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## FOR YOUR DIARY ...

- ◆ April 6 – [Spokes Hustings for the Council elections](#)
- ◆ May 4 – **Council elections** (all councils in Scotland) – see 4 and 5 below
- ◆ *More events* – check the events column on left side of [Spokes website](#).

## 1. Happy New Year to all Spokes members – *help us make it a good one!*

- ◆ There are two really important issues for cycling development in Scotland at the start of 2017 – the *Scottish Budget* (para 2 below) and *Manifestos for the Council elections* (4 below).
- ◆ A great way that you can help is by emailing your MSPs and/or councillors. Lots of members already do this - why not do the same! Find your political representatives at [www.writetothem.com](http://www.writetothem.com). The holiday is a great opportunity to write about the above issues or any local matter that particularly concerns you.
- ◆ Have you tried visiting your councillor or MSP at their surgery? Not many people take the time to do this, and you can sometimes have a great effect with a face-to-face chat. If you'd like to try, ask your representative(s) what are their arrangements to meet constituents.
- ◆ The decision of the Council to go ahead with the East-West City Centre Cycleroute, including the main-road 'Option A' route at Roseburn, is a great start to 2017 and a great example of how emails and other pressure from individuals helped back up the formal arguments from Spokes, from the Roseburn Support Group and others. See 3 below.
- ◆ For the New Year we hope, [like last year](#), to have a website article with most popular tweets of 2016 ... you can re-live the highlights and lowlights, and retweet any you'd like to make even more popular!

## 2. Scottish Government draft budget – *our top concern right now*

The draft budget, published in December, is pretty disappointing for cycling, and active travel in general.

- ◆ The *increase* in trunk road and motorway cash is almost 4 times the *total* for cycling *and* walking for the *whole* of Scotland. Spending on major roads is now at an all-time record, way up even on 2016.
- ◆ Meanwhile cycling/walking cash falls from just 1.8% of total transport spending to a mere 1.6%. The actual amount remains static at £39m, but the percentage is down due to the size of the roads increase. Compare this with Edinburgh Council, where 10% of transport cash goes to cycling in the 17/18 budget.
- ◆ Air travel is promised a £300m tax break through halving then scrapping Air Passenger Duty - and with no mention of which part of future transport or other budgets will be cut to pay for this.
- ◆ There is now no hope of the Scottish Government reaching its [manifesto](#) "determination" that 10% of all trips in Scotland will be by bike by 2020. By investing like Denmark and the Netherlands did (and still do) they can reach it in a reasonable number of years, but at present levels it literally will take decades.

**Please email your MSPs now.** The SNP government no longer has a majority at Holyrood, and so they can only get the budget passed by making concessions to one or more other parties. Intensive negotiations between parties have already started and will continue till the budget is finalised and voted on in the New Year.

*More information and how you can help* – see our [website article](#) and our [tweet](#).

### 3. East-West cycleroute – *thanks if you helped!!*

We've mentioned this already in (1) above. Crucially the decision to go ahead with the route, and in particular with Option A, was all-party, so is unlikely to be reversed after the council elections. **The fact that councillors from all parties hear from their constituents about cycling issues greatly helps getting all-party agreement.**

For the full story, see our [website article](#) and our [tweet](#).

*If you emailed your councillors, why not send them a quick thank-you, and say why it matters to you. Councillors get lots of brickbats and not many thank-you's, so they'll appreciate it!*

As well as thanks to all individuals who emailed councillors, our particular thanks go to Richard Grant of Spokes Planning Group, and Henry Whaley, a Spokes member, but working mainly through the local Roseburn Support Group. Both Richard and Henry devoted huge amounts of time, energy and nouse to the campaign.

Finally – we are still at a fairly early stage of the project – there is detailed planning, Traffic Regulation Orders, funding arrangements and ongoing consultations before the route appears on the ground – hopefully starting before the end of 2017. We will of course continue to advise [members](#) when it's useful to comment – for example when the Traffic Orders are published.

#### Join Roseburn Cycle Route Community Support Group

If the East-West route means a lot to you, and particularly if you live in, work in or visit the area, why not join the local support group, so they speak for more people and also can keep you updated. Details [here](#).

### 4. Council Elections (1) – *please help influence manifestos!*

Elections take place across Scotland on 4 May 2017. Our points below relate to Edinburgh City Council, but whichever council you live in, check out our [website article](#) about influencing party manifestos.

**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 cycleroute consultations and in facilities on the ground - and we can expect a great deal more if it continues. *You* can help make sure it does continue!!

#### 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 a **LibDem** contact but will add it to our website article when 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. It is better to make 2 or 3 points that you consider really important, rather than a long list.

## 5. Council Elections (2) – *send us your best local idea*

Once the election is closer we hope to suggest one priority cycle scheme - large or small – for each Council ward in Edinburgh. We need *your* help to tell us your priority for the council ward where you live (and/or work). Please send us your **top** one or two recommendations for your ward, and any other wards that affect you – just one or possibly two top ideas per ward, not a long list.

To find the name of your ward (and its current councillors) enter your postcode [here](#).

To find a map of the Council wards go to the [Council online atlas](#). Click the '+' beside *Admin Boundaries*, then tick the box beside *Edinburgh Wards*. Unfortunately the ward names are not displayed on the map, only the boundaries, but hopefully you can tie that up with your ward name from above.

Email your suggestion and the name of your ward to... [planning@spokes.org.uk](mailto:planning@spokes.org.uk).

If you have difficulty finding the name of your ward, send us the postcode of your suggested scheme - you can find this on the map by clicking the *Postcode Units* box and then zooming in by clicking the '+' in the compass at the top left several times, until postcode names appear.

## 6. Volunteers needed!!

- ◆ **Wanted – Assistant Stall Organiser.** Stalls are vital for Spokes at festivals, meetings, conferences. We have volunteers to help at stalls but organisation is crucial to arrange dates, volunteers, materials, etc. Our previous stall organiser is now out of Edinburgh frequently. Mies from Resources Group has taken over, but would really appreciate someone to work with her – and possibly become main organiser eventually. You'd if possible be sometimes available in the day, and also if possible able to come to our Resources Group (roughly monthly at 7pm). To find out more, email [mknottenbelt1@gmail.com](mailto:mknottenbelt1@gmail.com).
- ◆ **Wanted – Map promoter.** We'd like to make a bigger effort promoting our maps, especially the new Edinburgh map, to bike shops - for example to visit all bike shops over a period of time, and maybe check on them every 6 months or so. Perhaps two volunteers could take half the city each. For a person with the time and interest, and perhaps business experience, additional forms of promotion might be possible, but even basic coverage of all bike shops would be really useful.
- ◆ **Wanted by [WalkCycleVote](#)** [modest payment possible] - a superbly organised, meticulous, person with spreadsheet skills and plenty time available in March/April, to identify council election candidates for all Scotland and all parties. If you think you are suitable, contact Suzanne.Forup AT cyclinguk.org.

## 7. Consultations – *please make your views known*

- ◆ Even if you miss a closing date, many consultations give an email address and accept late comments.
- ◆ If possible, email us a copy of your response to consultations.

**Edinburgh** (and check for more or newer consultations at [consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk))

- ◆ **Closes 27 Jan** [North West Locality Improvement Plan](#) The Council recently divided the City into four 'Localities', with many services to be operated at a Locality level (you can find the boundaries on the Council map – 5 above – tick the *Localities* box in the Admin Boundaries section). This consultation seeks your priorities for the NW Locality under various headings, including "Place" (environment, roads, parks, etc). The survey is open to people who use or visit the area, as well as residents

### Lothians

- ◆ **Closes 15 Jan** [Fisherrow Harbour & Waterfront area](#)
- ◆ **Closes 6 Jan** [East Lothian budget consultation](#) Your chance to argue for better cycle funding.
- ◆ **Check for more or newer consultations at...**
  - [www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk](http://www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk)
  - [www.midlothian.gov.uk/consultation/open](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/consultation/open)
  - [www.westlothian.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/consultations)

**Scotland** (and check for more or newer consultations at [consult.scotland.gov.uk](http://consult.scotland.gov.uk))

- ◆ **ASAP Scottish Government draft budget** There is not an online consultation, but please do help by emailing your MSP(s) – see 2 above.
- ◆ **Closes 27 Feb Raising Planning Fees** Officially this consultation is about fees for major developments, but it gives us the chance to again raise the very unreasonable £192 fee to seek [permission for a garden shed](#), e.g. for bike storage.  

A very brief reply is fine. We suggest you just answer the question *Do you agree with the proposed maximum fee level?* with NO, then enter a comment such as that sheds or bike-containers of acceptable size, colour etc, should be permitted without the need for any fee or planning application.
- ◆ **Closes 31 March National Transport Strategy** Scotland's National Transport Strategy is to be reviewed in 2017, and the Scottish Government is seeking early views on what should be the **main themes** of the strategy. It is vital that we get much greater emphasis on local travel, especially cycling and walking, as compared to new and widened trunk roads – and **it needs to be reflected in the balance of spending, not just in nice words**. The current balance is greatly out of kilter, as in the draft 17/18 budget (2 above). *Please do respond to the survey and make these points.*
- ◆ **ASAP Cycling by Design** The government is to revise this manual for building cycle infrastructure. The existing (2010) version was designed only for trunk road cycle facilities (though many councils also use it for local facilities) but the new edition is likely to be aimed at council facilities as well as trunk roads. A consultant, Andy Mulholland, has been commissioned to work on this and is currently seeking views on what the content should be and how the document should be used. *See the article in the web link above for more details, then email Andy your suggestions at [planforbikes@gmail.com](mailto:planforbikes@gmail.com).*
- ◆ **Closes 24 Feb Rail Infrastructure Strategy after 2019** You may get some ideas from [our response](#) to a previous somewhat similar consultation (by Network Rail).

## 8. Important tweets – **please retweet!!**

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

- ◆ [Scottish draft budget - cycling v trunk roads, with pictures](#)
- ◆ [Scottish draft budget - trunk roads biggest increase in budget](#)
- ◆ [The Roseburn 'Option A' decision – how it happened & what next](#)
- ◆ [Visit the Roseburn shops](#) [by bike!]
- ◆ [How to influence party manifestos](#)

## FINALLY – **help Spokes and keep in touch**

- ◆ 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.
- ◆ 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](mailto:updates@spokes.org.uk).