

Spokes Action Update 27.06.17

... 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. New Edinburgh Council

- At last Edinburgh has a new Council. As expected, it is a SNP/Labour coalition, in place of the previous Labour/SNP coalition. Even added together, SNP/Lab is one seat short of an overall majority, and as a general rule they are likely to go for policies which get support from the Green councillors. Overall, we are hopeful that the new Council will be at least as positive on cycling as the previous Council – this is discussed briefly in [this article](#) on our website.
- As highlighted in our summer bulletin, SNP, Labour and Greens all included in their election manifestos retaining 10% of the transport budget (capital and revenue) for cycling, so that is more or less guaranteed. **Thank you** if you are one of the many Spokes members who contacted councillors or parties about the cycle budget in the run-up to the Council elections.
- New Transport Convener is [Cllr Lesley Macinnes](#) (Liberton/Gilmerton, a new SNP councillor) and Deputy is [Cllr Karen Doran](#) (City Centre, Labour). We tweeted a few basic details [here](#). We don't know much about their personal views or, importantly, their level of pro-activeness on transport yet. The only other relevant position we know so far is that Spokes member [Cllr Chas Booth](#) is to be the Green's transport representative.
- Another great sign is that a positive motion about cycling, particularly tramline dangers, has been lodged by the new Transport Convener for the Council meeting on 29 June. We tweeted the original motion [here](#). Unfortunately it was then somewhat watered down [find it in Agenda A [here](#)] though is still worth having. The motion is in the name of the Transport Convener but was developed and discussed between the Greens and the two coalition partners, so it is very likely to be approved, and is a good portent for future cross-party co-operation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO *[most of this applies too if you live in another Council area]*

- It is vital not to take for granted that the new Council will remain bike-friendly. We urge you and all Spokes members to continue every so often to contact your councillor about those cycling issues that concern you, either in the city as a whole or in your own local area. **A big reason why Edinburgh Council is relatively bike friendly** is because many councillors hear often from their constituents about what needs done. It is important also to give praise where due - this really helps create a positive atmosphere for going further. Without continuing pressure and support from constituents, cycling will slip down the priority list for many councillors and for the council as a whole.
- If you are live in Edinburgh, why not email your councillors now, say you welcome the above motion (if you do!) and ask if they will vote in favour of it at the 29 June Council meeting?
- To email, find your councillors at writetothem.com or on your local council website [Edinburgh [here](#)]. Many councillors can also be contacted on twitter and/or facebook, though generally email gives you most scope to explain things. Finally, do consider **visiting them for a chat at their surgery** - face to face contact can be especially persuasive and it shows you have a real concern. Ask them by email for their surgery arrangements.
- As always, however, continual problems do arise with delivery and consultation. Recently, the new Fountainbridge cycle lane which is only 1m wide and goes through a central-island pinch point - a significant danger and not following official Guidance. The process by which this was decided needs investigated. Some details & comments can be found in this [trail of tweets](#). Local councillor and Spokes member [Gavin Corbett](#) is taking it up within the Council.

2. Spokes deputations on 29 June

- We have asked permission for a deputation at the Council meeting (starting 10am) where the motion mentioned in (1) above is to be discussed. You should be able to watch the meeting on the [Council webcast](#), either live or later.
- At exactly the same time, Spokes will be appearing at the Scottish Parliament Petitions Committee to support [Gorebridge Community Development Trust](#) who have lodged a petition prompted by the Scottish Government's very disappointing decision over its replacement for **Sheriffhall roundabout**. You can watch the Committee on [Parliament TV](#) (Committee Room 3). For the background, see our main story [here](#) and our main tweet [here](#). *If you are concerned it is still very much worth emailing your MSPs and asking them to raise your concerns with the Transport Minister.* Find your MSPs at www.writetothem.com.

3. Thank you! (you?)

- Thanks if you objected last year to the **Causey** proposals which included removing the cycle lanes on Chapel Street and introducing a cycling pinch point. The proposals have now been [revised](#), with the cycle lanes retained and no pinch point.
- Thanks if you responded to our request for copies of old Spokes maps for our archive. We now have at least one copy of all 10 **Edinburgh** map editions. However we don't yet have editions 1 or 2 of the **East Lothian** map (i.e. the editions pre-2014) or edition 3 of the **Midlothian** map (post-2002 and pre-2015).
- Thanks if you came along to our **Road Danger public meeting** [report expected soon on our website] or the **Bike Breakfast** [\[report\]](#); [\[tweet\]](#). It is great for politicians to see such big turnouts and to have members of the public speaking to them on cycling issues.

4. Edinburgh cyclerroute consultations – **closing 30 June**

The 2 consultations below close soon. In both cases there is an online response form and an email address for more detailed comments or for queries.

But *please do make your own individual submission* to the Council. If possible begin by welcoming the Council's initiative before going on to make your criticisms or suggestions for how it should be improved/ changed.

There will be a further consultation stage with leaflets door-to-door in the areas affected.

- **[Holyrood Park/ Pollock Halls to Mayfield area](#)** (click for details). [Summary document](#). The Spokes submission has now gone in and is on our [South-Central web page](#).
- **[Quiet Route 8/ Stenhouse to Saughton Park area](#)** (click for details). [Summary document](#).

Incidentally, there are now **reports** on several of the cyclerroute consultations conducted last year. They are on [this council web page](#).

5. Other local consultations [Edinburgh & Lothians] - **including 29 June**

- **Edinburgh South East Locality plan [city centre to bypass] – drop-in consultation 29 June**
Edinburgh is increasingly moving to service-delivery through 4 'Localities'. A map and some background is [here](#). Although this is not primarily about transport, active living and active travel are vital ingredients. The drop-in is Thursday, June 29th from 6.00-7.30pm in the Business Centre, City Chambers, 253 High Street, EH1 1YJ. More info from 0131 529 5129 | andrew.gallacher@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Check for more or newer consultations at...

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

6. Scottish Government consultations – end 30 June & 7 August

If you make a submission please send us a copy, or any important points, as soon as possible, to consider in the official Spokes response. But *please do make your own individual submission* if these topics concern you. In all cases there is an online QA or you can email a response.

- **[20mph Default Bill for Scotland](#)** (click for details) **Ends 7 August**. The Bill is promoted by [Mark Ruskell MSP](#), who spoke at our June 14 public meeting. According to www.20splenty.org the benefits include the following. More info and references can be found in the [consultation document](#) about the proposed Bill.
 - Safer - about 20% fewer casualties and 7-10 times fewer fatalities
 - Every 1mph less reduces crashes 5-6%
 - 20mph limits where people are, are best practice according to the World Health Organisation and many other health and environmental bodies
 - Healthier population who will walk and cycle more, reducing NHS and social care costs
 - Contributes to the ‘[Duty of Care](#)’ of the vulnerable - especially children, who eyesight isn’t developed enough to reliably cross with traffic at 25mph until 14 years old
 - Cleaner and quieter - less air and noise pollution
 - Better for independence and equality, especially for the vulnerable
 - Simpler and eight times cheaper than town by town 20mph limits
 - Quicker to implement than town by town 20mph limits
 - Compliance improves from country-wide messaging to drivers and conformity of limits.
 - Easier for police to enforce.
 - Fits with Vision Zero – the principle that no-one should die or be seriously injured on roads
- **[Pavement & Double-Parking Bill](#)** **Ends 30 June**. In the previous Scottish Parliament a private member's Bill to prohibit pavement parking, double parking and parking at dropped kerbs reached an advanced stage but fell when the election came. The Scottish Government now plans its own Bill and is consulting the public on what should be in it. There is a danger that double parking and/or parking at dropped kerbs may be dropped, though these can be major problems for safe and convenient cycling. **Please do respond if any of this concerns you.**
- **[Air Departure Tax](#)** **Ends 15 September**. Formerly known as Air Passenger Duty (APD) the Scottish Government proposes to cut this levy by 50%, **costing the taxpayer £150m a year, roughly 4 times the £39m they invest in walking and cycling for the whole of Scotland**. Cutting APD also encourages flying, the most polluting form of transport, will significantly increase carbon emissions, and is a commercial threat to rail services between Scotland and London. Transform Scotland has just issued this [information page](#) about the consultation.

7. Substantial cash for community & innovative cycle projects

There are 2 opportunities to apply for funding for projects small or large to increase levels of bike use, if you and a local organisation have an idea (and the time to run the project). Spokes might be able to help in a supporting mode, but is unlikely to have capacity to organise projects.

- [Forth Active Sustainable Travel \(FAST\)](#) grants from SEStran. Funding up to £200K. **Closing date 30 June**.
- [Climate Challenge Fund](#) Funding up to £150K. **Closing date 28 August**.

8. Help with organising and running Spokes stalls

Message from our stalls organiser, Mies...

Stalls are an important part of Spokes' work: it is our public face; we answer a lot of questions from the public (from where to buy a cheap bike or how to get started on cycling, to campaign updates and rides' groups); we sell our maps; and we make people aware of all other things we are doing that can help improve cycling and how they can get involved. To date, we have run a regular set of 20-30 stalls in trusted venues, with a core set of materials that are stored in the Spokes Office on Dalry Road and that we usually move around in panniers.

At a stalls group review earlier this year we decided on the following:

- we reviewed and slightly reorganised stall materials. We now have a core stock of materials produced mostly by Spokes, and some 'background' materials that are kept in a folder for pulling out when someone wants to know about these topics. We have initiated this in response to people's feelings that the stalls were too full and overwhelming for casual visitors who do not know what we do already.
- we are implementing better processes for briefing less experienced volunteers: we now ask volunteers to come ten minutes before the start of their shift, so the stall is handed over properly. If you are a new volunteer, you will be sent some information that you can familiarise yourself with in advance by email.
- we decided on a regular social event to which we would invite active volunteers in the stalls group: date to be confirmed, but we have an eye on every autumn, perhaps around the end of the busy season. This is not only to provide a chance for everyone to socialise and get to know other volunteers, also to thank people for their help and to discuss any feedback.
- we decided to see if we can run more stalls, perhaps as part of community events/programmes, and/or in parts of town where we have not done any before,. Clearly whether we will be able to do this depends on enough enthusiastic responses to take on the extra work involved.

There are two ways in which you can get involved:

1. Ask to be on our list of stall volunteers (if you are not already) to whom we send requests for help on stalls. You would be allocated a two-to-three hour 'shift' along with somebody else. We brief you in advance about your responsibilities and the materials available at the stall. During 'your shift' you will talk to the public, sell maps, whatever seems productive during that time. You certainly don't have to volunteer for every stall (there are a good number of potential volunteers) and similarly don't feel you need to withdraw from this list if you have not been able to volunteer for a while.

2. If you support the idea of expanding our reach to places where we have not run stalls before, and if you would like to help set up/organise a new stall in your or other communities, please get in touch with me so we can discuss your ideas.

Mies can be contacted by email at [mknottenbelt1 AT gmail.com](mailto:mknottenbelt1@gmail.com).

9. Finally

- Remember to check out our **website** every so often www.spokes.org.uk.
- We are active on **Twitter** [@SpokesLothian](https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian). Follow us and RT tweets you support. Check our 'favourites' for important or interesting tweets. Recent 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 AT spokes.org.uk](mailto:updates@spokes.org.uk).