

THE CHALLENGE!!

Doctors, highway engineers, architects, environment and public health experts are calling on government to invest 10% of transport funds in walking and cycling [Take Action on Active Travel, www.adph.org.uk].

Yet the Scottish Government spends less than 1% on cycling [Spokes 100], and probably no more on walking. The dreadful consequence is shown in the tables opposite.

And Edinburgh Council has given less emphasis to cycling in recent years, due to the Streetscape initiative's stress on subjective visual appeal, and the beguiling new tram - which Spokes supports, but which should have been an integrated transport measure based around a car reduction policy. Yet tram, streetscape and cycling all manage to integrate well in Copenhagen or Amsterdam!



Copenhagen
Aaron Naparstek
www.streetsblog.org

Spokes therefore challenges the Scottish government and the City Council to invest seriously in cycle policy. SNP Ministers [see opposite] clearly understand Scotland's dire position. Yet, for all their initiatives, they invest if anything less than the previous Lab/LibDem government. And in Edinburgh the manifesto promise of the leading party could not be clearer [see opposite]. Yet 18 months after the election there is no major new cycling initiative.

Our challenges are inside this Bulletin, and will be delivered to the Parliament and the City Chambers in European Mobility Week [www.mobilityweek.eu] on CarFree day, September 22. We challenge the government to set up a new cycle projects fund, doubling cycle money from 1% to still only 2% of total transport spend. We challenge Edinburgh City Council to implement a European-scale cycle demonstration project in the Lothian Road corridor.

HOW YOU CAN HELP [contact details on back]

- Tell your MSPs [constituency & list] why you want more invested in cycling. Ask that their party commits to our challenge and that they speak to the Minister.
- Tell your councillors [you now have 3 or 4] why our Edinburgh challenge matters to you. Ask for their party to commit to it, and to raise it in the Council.
- Come along lunchtime Sep 22, on your bike, to take our challenges to Parliament and Council – see box.

HELP DELIVER OUR CHALLENGES!!

Meet 12.30 in Parliament Square on Mon 22 September. We cycle to the City Council, then Parliament. We are inviting top ruling politicians to receive our challenges, and say a brief word. We aim to end by 13.30. If you don't have to leave, join us then in the Parliament cafe. If you plan to come, email [jackieh\[at\]waitrose.com](mailto:jackieh[at]waitrose.com) if possible.

SCOTLAND'S TRAGIC CASE

Country	All journey bike share	Deaths / 100m km cycled	% adult obese	% child overweight
Netherl'ds	27%	1.1	10%	10%
Denmark	18%	1.5	12%	15%
Germany	10%	1.7	20%	17%
Scotland	1%	3.6 [UK]	24%	33%

	Capital city	All trips	Work trips
Bike share in northern Europe capital cities	Amsterdam	27%	40%
	Copenhagen	29%	32%
	Berlin	10%	?
	Edinburgh	2%	4%

[Sources: www.iof.org & 'Making Cycling Irresistible: Lessons from Netherlands, Denmark and Germany,' Puchler & Buehler, 2008 www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher/irresistible.pdf].

WHAT THEY SAY...

"With a modal share for cycling of just 1% we clearly have much more to do if we are to emulate our European neighbours who enjoy 10% to 30% modal share"
Transport Minister Stewart Stevenson [Herald 14.5.08].

"Other northern European cities promote cycling, as do their governments. Not just Amsterdam, but the likes of Helsinki have made vast improvements for what is, both environmentally and in terms of public health, vital. I will write to my colleague [Stewart Stevenson] to ask what steps the government are taking."
Scottish Justice Minister, Kenny MacAskill [email to constituent].

"We want to make Edinburgh a model cycle-friendly and walker-friendly city" ... **LibDem Edinburgh manifesto**

WHY MORE MONEY IS NEEDED...

"Copenhagen's bike culture was built almost from scratch - there was a political will to make it happen, funds were allocated - funds are still allocated. We ride lots because of visionary political decisions" [Guardian 26.6.8].

"The Dutch have achieved the highest rates of cycling in the world by providing high quality infrastructure. This works; the proof is in the eating" [www.hembrow.eu/cycling]

"The key to high levels of cycling appears to be provision of separate cycling facilities along heavily trafficked main roads and at intersections, combined with traffic calming residential neighbourhoods" [Puchler&Buehler 2008, above].

This Bulletin is a special issue. Our next normal Bulletin will be late autumn. www.spokes.org.uk 0131 313 2114.

Help Spokes, other cyclists, and yourself, by writing to your MSPs, MP, councillors and the press every so often. See back page for contacts. Ask them to raise your question with the relevant Minister / Convener. Send us the results!

Challenge to City of Edinburgh Council

To: Cllr Phil Wheeler, Convener of Transport

Dear Councillor Wheeler

We are writing, in European Mobility Week, to ask that the Council itself starts to demonstrate a more urgent mobility on encouraging higher levels of cycle use. We also put forward one specific measure which would make a significant impact.

The reasons for raising levels of cycle use are well known - environment, public health, congestion - and must be taken more seriously through real action, not just policies and warm words. Raising cycle use is embedded in Edinburgh's Local Transport Strategy and is now recognised throughout the Council's Single Outcome Agreement with the government.

Many examples from European comparator towns, cities and countries show that consistent investment, to create conditions which are not only safe but welcoming for cyclists, is critical to achieving major increases in cycle use. For example, Copenhagen, where 32% of commuting is by bike, and investment to raise this further is underway ... *"The city's bike culture was built almost from scratch. There was a political will to make it happen, funds were allocated and are still allocated ... We ride bicycles because of visionary political decisions"* [Guardian, 26.6.08, Wall Street Journal 4.5.07].

Edinburgh has never seen determination and commitment like this, although over the years many individual smaller initiatives have been taken, and increases in cycle use have been achieved - against a background where for many years cycling was declining in most other British cities.

Unfortunately, in the last few years two factors have combined to lower the priority given to cycle use. *First*, an understanding of 'streetscape' which appeared to regard cycle facilities as undesirable for visual reasons - to be avoided, or installed without coloured surfacing, unless there is a very pressing safety case. *Second*, the tram - welcomed by Spokes - has been allowed to dominate the transport agenda, and also now appears likely to bring significantly worse cycling conditions in Princes Street, Leith Walk and elsewhere. Nor has the opportunity offered by the tram to concurrently reduce car use, and thus improve options for pedestrians and cyclists, been grasped. Virtually all the recommendations of the Dutch Transport Consultant brought over jointly by TIE and Spokes were rejected for these two reasons - whereas in Denmark or the Netherlands good cycle facilities would be an essential requirement in any new transport scheme, and would if anything be regarded as enhancing streetscape.

The recent failure of the City to win through in the government Sustainable Travel Towns funding bid is perhaps a reflection of this lower priority afforded to cycling at top levels of the council in recent years. Edinburgh now appears to be losing out to places such as Dumfries and increasingly Glasgow, who have clearer ideas and ambitions on cycling as an important transport mode, and are already putting significant effort into it.

For all the above reasons, now is the time to take a step change forward so that Edinburgh is seen by all to be not just retaining its reputation for cycle policy innovation, but taking cycle use utterly seriously as a means of transport, and reaching for European-style cycling conditions and levels. We therefore propose the following initiative...

THE SPOKES PROPOSAL

Our proposal is to completely redesign the corridor from Meadows/Bruntsfield to the city centre - and in particular Lothian Road - to become an area which is genuinely cycle friendly. We propose that the council calls in a Danish or Dutch traffic expert to work with the council to redesign the area so that it caters far better in particular for cycling, but also for walking and for public transport. For cyclists, this could include advance-phase cycle traffic lights as in Copenhagen, some segregated areas, and so on.



Edinburgh Lothian Road cycle commuting [photo: Dave du Feu]

Design and consultation would take place over the next 12 months, aiming to complete the work well before the end of the term of the current Council. Clearly, the council would also have to identify funding to implement the scheme. Our reasons for suggesting this particular project are as follows...

- ◆ This major corridor links dense residential areas with the city centre, at distances ideal for walking and cycling.
- ◆ The council's map of city centre crashes/injuries involving cyclists shows the greatest concentration to be along Lothian Road, between Fountainbridge and the West End. This is an area with no cycle lanes, and with advance stop lines missing at several junction approaches.
- ◆ Lothian Road is relatively wide, and there are no plans to introduce tram lines.
- ◆ Spokes traffic counts show that, despite the existing adverse cycling conditions, this major and unavoidable desire-line already attracts large numbers of cyclists. Our 8-9am rush hour counts found 19% of citybound vehicles to be cycles in May 2007 and 2008, and 14% even on two miserable November days. A good cycling environment should boost these figures further, as well as reducing casualties amongst existing cyclists.

It is time to show convincingly that Edinburgh is serious about cycle use. Our proposal will do that on many levels - from road safety through to delivering the Single Outcome Agreement; from assisting the many people who would like to start cycling through to demonstrating that Edinburgh sees itself as a modern European Capital.

We look forward to your response.

Dave du Feu
for Spokes

Challenge to the Scottish Government

To: **John Swinney MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Sustainable Growth.** Also to **Patrick Harvie MSP**, as the Greens are in a loose arrangement with the government.

Dear Mr Swinney

We are writing, in European Mobility Week, to ask that the Scottish Government itself starts to demonstrate a more urgent level of mobility on encouraging higher levels of cycle use.

The reasons for raising cycle use levels are well known – environment, public health, congestion - and need to be taken more seriously through real action, not just policies and warm words. Substantial modal shift from car to cycle use would be a huge contributor to the government's Single National Purpose, its Strategic Objectives and National Outcomes*; it would support manifesto commitments** from all the main parties at the last election; would chime well with many of the Single Outcome Agreements now being reached with Scottish local authorities; and would tie in with the spirit of the Climate Change Bill and associated consultations.

***Government Objectives** are listed in Spokes Bulletin 99 p3
****SNP Holyrood manifesto:** To “*promote walking and cycling.*” And to make journeys “*greener, safer, easier.*”
****Green manifesto:** “*We want cycle funding to quadruple by 2014 to at least 4% [of Scottish transport spending]*”

Examples from European comparator countries show that consistent investment, to create conditions which are not only safe but welcoming for cyclists, result in major shifts to cycle use. For example, Copenhagen, where 32% of commuting is by bike, and investment to raise this further is underway ... “*The city's bike culture was built almost from scratch. There was a political will to make it happen, funds were allocated and are still allocated ... We ride bicycles because of visionary political decisions*” [Guardian, 26.6.08, Wall Street Journal 4.5.07].

Over the years many initiatives have been taken by the Scottish government and its predecessors, and worthwhile increases in cycle use achieved in some limited areas where investment has been made. What has stayed constant, however, is that the proportion of government transport spending allocated to cycling projects has remained under 1% - a shocking indictment in relation to Scotland's comparator European nations. The result has been that whilst comparator countries have seen cycle use rising to 10%-30% of all journeys – even up to 50% in some towns and cities - Scotland as a whole has seen cycle use remain at miserable levels.

When this and past governments are tackled on cycle investment we are told of all the initiatives underway – currently including cycle training, a few sustainable travel town experiments, the CWSS fund, a tourist/leisure Inverness-Oban route multi-year project, a Cycle Action Plan, and so on. All are welcome - but, adding up the cycling element of all, we still remain at no more than 1% of transport spending – a mere £20m or so from a total of over £2000m.

And yet, the problem is recognised by government! Transport Minister **Stewart Stevenson** stated recently [Herald 14.5.08] “*With a current modal share for cycling of just 1% we clearly have much more to do if we are to emulate our European neighbours who enjoy between 10% and 30% modal share.*” And in a recent report **Cycling Scotland**, the government-funded advisory/promotion body, quoted Spokes research showing cycle spending at around 1% of total Scottish transport spend, and concluded, “*If Scotland wishes to increase cycle use, this funding picture has to improve.*”

THE SPOKES PROPOSAL

Now is the time to take a step change forward so that Scotland reaches for, and is seen by all to be reaching for, European-style cycling policies, conditions and levels.

We therefore propose that the government in its 2009/10 budget takes the first step in this direction by creating a new £20m cycle projects fund, additional to current initiatives, and so raising cycle spending towards a still small 2% (!) of total transport spend. The fund would be administered by the government's existing Sustainable Transport Team, and would be open to bids over a certain level (say £1m) by any relevant body – for example, Sustrans, local authorities, Transport Partnerships, First ScotRail, BWB, and so on. The reasons for suggesting this approach are...

- ◆ Administration by the Sustainable Transport Team would avoid new bureaucracy but retain public accountability.
- ◆ Limiting bids to over (say) £1m would minimise government administration but, as well as supporting larger projects which have no current straightforward funding mechanisms, would enable bodies like Sustrans, Cycling Scotland or Regional Transport Partnerships to put forward bids comprising packages of smaller related projects in a particular regional or topic area.
- ◆ In subsequent years, cycle expenditure needs to rise much further, to reach European levels. At present however, the skills and experience to spend such sums effectively may not yet be widespread in all parts of Scotland. By starting with a bidding fund, those bodies with existing experience and capabilities will identify themselves, expertise will expand, and Scotland can thus make a rapid start on developing a culture of proper provision for cyclists.
- ◆ Cycling investment should not just be limited to local authorities. Ambition and innovation are of the essence in our proposal, with all sectors and stakeholders needing the opportunity and incentive to start promoting cycle use in a substantial way – a tangible statement of Scotland's overarching commitment to sustainable development.

We suggest the money be found by re-allocation of current priorities. A very small percentage reduction in funds to grow the trunk road network would double that for expanding cycle use. Our proposal is in any case small in transport terms - representing under 1% of total transport spend.

Finally, we do of course appreciate that last year's Spending Review covers 3 years but, with growing concern over transport emissions and obesity, the position is far too urgent to wait a further two years.

We look forward to your response.



Spokes fought for years to get a quality route to the Forth Bridge – but the agreed budget was lost when the new government changed Transport Partnership rules. Now a special scheme is tortuously being devised by government and council, under Spokes pressure. Our proposal would give a routine funding path for such schemes.

2008 COMPETITION

There's still time to enter our summer competition - **'My Favourite Bike Facility in Edinburgh or Lothian'** - closing date **25 September**. We want to highlight some good things that local councils (or others) have done to improve life for cyclists, so we need **your** entry!!

Tell us your **favourite bike facility in Edinburgh or Lothian** - parking, path, onroad lane, junction facility, whatever - and **WHY** it's your favourite. Plenty people will say what's bad, but we also want to credit the good! Your description of **why** will be the most important factor in deciding winners. A photo is welcome but not essential. Post entries, or email to spokes@spokes.org.uk [use pdf or rtf if possible]. Full rules at www.spokes.org.uk.

PRIZES INCLUDE: £50 **Bike Station** voucher [eg. for new parts, workshop fee, personal training, or renovated bike]; **Bike Co-op** Revolution Stow Expert rucsac; **Kalpna Indian** veg meal for 2; **Bicycle Works** Tool bottle/tool; **Engine Shed** drinks/cakes; **Sandy Gilchrist** mini-pump.



CONSULTATIONS

YOUR CHANCE TO ABOLISH GLASS ON ROADS!

Respond by 30 Oct: The Scottish government is consulting on a **Zero Waste Strategy**, one idea [Proposal 5] being a glass bottles deposit - possibly other containers too. Spokes suggested this in earlier consultations, as members have reported far less glass on roads in European countries and US States with bottle deposits. The consultation paper gives examples; see also the *Recycling* link at www.hembrow.eu/cycling. If short of time just email zerowaste@scotland.gsi.gov.uk with your ideas on achieving zero waste. Or, see the consultation/feedback site www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations [see 28.7.08].

ADAPTING OUR WAYS: MANAGING CLIMATE RISK

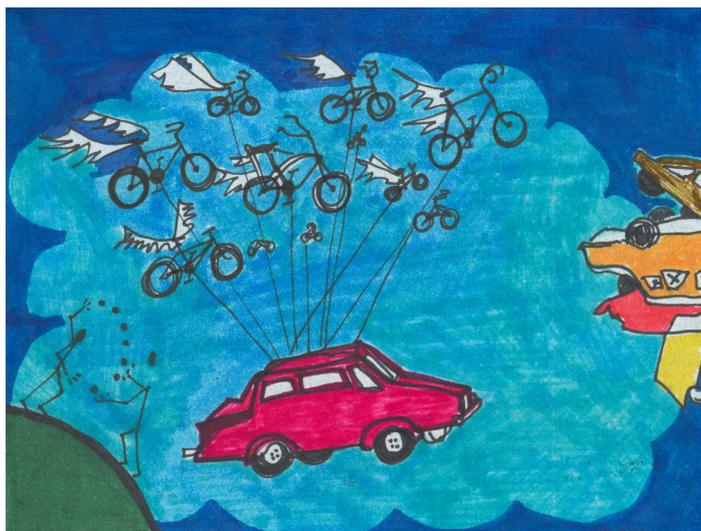
Respond by 31 Oct: How to prepare for those climate change impacts already unavoidable or likely. One impact will be the necessity to use less fossil fuels - so the government should now be investing far more in cycling - and ensuring compact communities to make cycling easy. *Details:* www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations [24.6.08].

CYCLING ACTION PLAN FOR SCOTLAND

September 13: The government and Cycling Scotland are preparing a *Cycling Action Plan for Scotland*. A roadshow seeking public comment will be at St James Centre, Edinburgh [Princes St entry] 1200-1700. *Please go along and leave your ideas.* Spokes emphasises that while innovative ideas, training, publicity, etc, are valuable, **experience shows that substantial, long-lasting rises in cycle use require safe and welcoming infrastructure.** Page 1 shows the difference between Scotland, which tries to get away with 1% of transport spending, and the countries which invest substantially and consistently.

EUROPEAN MOBILITY WEEK Sep 16-22 INCLUDING CARFREE DAY Sep 22

International EMW info: www.mobilityweek.eu [nice site!]



'Goodbye Cars' by Sara Stout, from a worldwide collection of over 250 CarFree City postcards. www.worldcarfree.net.

EVENTS AROUND MOBILITY WEEK

Sep 16-22 For full local details see www.cleanairforall.info

Sep 14 www.pedalforScotland.org Glasgow->Edinburgh.

Sep 17 Schools bike awareness afternoons

Sep 18 Schools bike awareness afternoons

Sep 19 Commuter Challenge Help needed!!

Sep 20 Green Passport Day - family day; bike/walk along North Edinburgh path, Roseburn to Leith, Green Passports stamped along the route; prizes donated by local businesses.

Help needed to stamp passports - [maggie\[at\]trycycling.org.uk](mailto:maggie[at]trycycling.org.uk)

Sep 21 Portobello Carfree Day and Leith->PB community ride to join the fun and highlight need for decent route.

Sep 22 Carfree Day Spokes Ride to Parliament/Council [p1].

LATER EVENTS

Oct 5 Spokes Sunday Ride Annual lawn picnic at Dave du Feu, Linlithgow - bring own food; tea/coffee provided. *More info:* www.snowcycle.co.uk 445.7073 stuart@snowcycle.co.uk.

Oct 7 Cycling Scotland annual conference Perth. Theme: the cycling action plan for Scotland. www.holyrood.com/caps.

Late Oct/early Nov Spokes autumn mailout.

Dec 6 Climate March Glasgow www.globalclimatecampaign.org

For more news, rides and events, see the latest issues of *Spokesworker*, our action-update, at www.spokes.org.uk.

CONTACT YOUR POLITICIANS

Your constituency MSP or Lothians Regional MSPs at: Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh EH99 1SP, 0131.348.5000, or email: firstname.secondname.msp@scottish.parliament.uk. For example, Sarah.Boyack.MSP@scottish.parliament.uk. Find names at www.scottish.parliament.uk.

Contact your Edinburgh councillors [you have 3 or 4] at: City Chambers, High St, Edinburgh EH1 1YJ. 0131.529.3186 or email: firstname.surname@edinburgh.gov.uk.

Websites to find local politicians + more lobbying info:

www.writetothem.com, www.theyworkforyou.com

www.mysociety.org, politics.guardian.co.uk/askaristotle

Help Spokes, other cyclists, and yourself, by joining us! Keep in touch with cycle route news in Edinburgh, the Lothians and Scotland. Find out which politicians to write to, and when. Discover the latest bike maps. **Download a membership form at www.spokes.org.uk or send a stamped addressed envelope to Spokes, St Martins Church, 232 Dalry Road, Edinburgh EH11 2JG.**