



Appearing in the summer bulletin gives Sustrans Scotland a great opportunity to say a very big thank you to Spokes and its members for the tremendous pressure you exerted over the planned cuts to the active travel budget. The campaign was more successful than we ever imagined and the increase in Sustrans' infrastructure funding announced by the Government is very welcome.

In this section we want to give you a flavour of what we and our partners will deliver over the next three years. Before that let me set the context of who we are and what we aim to achieve.

Sustrans is a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. We work with families, communities, policy-makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

Over the next three years we aim to increase the number of trips made on and off the National Cycle Network by expanding our work that connects people to the places they want to go to under their own steam. Over half the car trips made in Scotland are short, eminently suitable for cycling and we want to turn that potential into reality. We also aim to complete those sections of the National Cycle Network that remain unfinished; particularly the section between Oban and Inverness on National Route 78, whilst also upgrading routes in and around Edinburgh. We are expanding our work in schools, which is having great success in Edinburgh, and work with Fife Council to increase cycling and walking in Kirkcaldy through the Make Your Move initiative.

There are other projects we want to see started in the next three years: to ensure better cycle parking and facilities at public transport hubs, particularly Haymarket and Waverley; and the Borders rail link needs stations that properly serve their local communities without the need for massive car parks and carbon emitting short trips.

Finally, we are looking forward to expanding our volunteering team in the Spokes area through the recruitment of a new Active Travel Champion Officer.

John Lauder, National Director



National Cycle Network and Community Links

The work being carried out in Edinburgh and Lothians this year has been part funded by Sustrans through our National Cycle Network Development fund and Community Links programme. These include:

- Improving the drainage and surfacing on a section of the Longniddry to Haddington Railway Path (National Route 76).
- Improving walking/cycling access ramps over the railway line at Meadowmill, Prestonpans.
- Widening almost 2 km of shared-use path along Easthouses Road, in Mayfield.
- Surfacing a shared-use path between Valleyfield and Harpers Brae, Pericuik.
- Constructing a 2.5 metre path between Edinburgh Road and Bell's Burn Avenue in Linlithgow.
- Constructing a path to the south of the railway line at Houstoun Industrial Estate, Livingston.
- Upgrading 200m path linking National Route 75 and the village of Seafield, West Lothian.

We will be running the **Community Links Programme** over the next three years. It's too late to apply for this year, but there are still two years to go. Community Groups should liaise with their Local Authority who can apply on their behalf. For more information about the Community Links Programme, see the Scottish pages on www.sustrans.org.uk

Our work in schools

We currently have three officers working with 55 schools across Perth, Edinburgh and Fife, through our I Bike initiative.

Through intense and direct engagement with children, parents and teaching staff, our officers have addressed the barriers to cycling and developed a whole school culture to cycling. The benefits have included:

- Number of children who told us they cycle to school every day has risen from 3% to 7%.
- Regular cycling to school has increased from 10.7% to 19.3%
- Number of secondary school girls cycling outside school has risen from 17% to 58%.

In Edinburgh Lynn Stocks is working with 10 schools and over the last few months we have seen bike checks and bike breakfasts in most of them. At Liberton High cyclists enjoyed a bacon roll on arrival and Wardle Primary had to hold their Bike Breakfast over two days to cater for demand.

Lynn is also supporting the 12 schools she worked with last year, where 'Bike Crews' are keeping up the momentum by planning activities throughout the year. Oxbgangs pupils recently organised a poster competition while Bonaly held a 'bling your bike' day.

If you would like Sustrans to work with a school near you, please get in touch with Sustrans via school-scotland@sustrans.org.uk





The Big Pedal

In March we held our annual virtual bike race called the Big Pedal. Schools across the UK were invited to join the three week long race and encourage pupils, parents and staff to cycle and scoot to school each day. During the three-week competition we saw 760,050 child journeys to school with 1,520,100 car journeys saved!

Scottish schools won two of the top three categories in the UK: Leswalt Primary in Stranraer was the fastest small primary school and Aboyne Academy in Aberdeen was the fastest secondary school.

Creating smarter travel choice in Kirkcaldy

Work continues in Kirkcaldy where we're delivering a range of initiatives in partnership with Fife Council, building on our achievements with lots of new activities planned for 2012. Confirmation of Scottish Government funding for three years will allow us to plan more improvements to the town network, including expanding existing traffic-free sections. Longer term projects, such as those requiring land acquisition or traffic orders, can now be programmed as a result of the long term funding.

Scottish Government funding will also support I Bike in Kirkcaldy, where the recent increase in cycling to local schools has been supported by additional cycle parking at a number of primary schools.

As well as a range of popular community events to promote cycling, including our cycling fun day in September which attracted more than 800 people, we are running adult cycle training sessions over the spring and summer. Sustrans has also received funding from the People's Health Lottery to run a 12-month project specifically addressing Active Travel for Health in Kirkcaldy, including working in health deprived areas. This is the first project of this kind that we have run in Scotland.

Helping Edinburgh achieve its Action Plan

We continue to work with the City of Edinburgh Council to deliver the Active Travel Action Plan. Key initiatives include funding the design and implementation of the new Family Cycle Network and Cycle Friendly City routes and working with schools in the city.

At the time of going to press, the Leith to Portobello Family Network section is under construction with completion due in June; this will radically improve the off-road route between Leith Links and Portobello promenade. New infrastructure includes a ramp at Leith Links, a bridge over Seafield Place, surfacing and lighting of the former Caledonian Railway alignment, new level access at Seafield Street and a widened shared-use footway along Seafield Road. This section will eventually become part of National Route 76.

Several Family Network routes are being designed, including National Cycle Network upgrades between The Meadows and the Innocent Railway Path (National Route 1) and the Union Canal (National Route 75). A feasibility study has been conducted into route options for linking Straiton Pond in Midlothian with the Burdiehouse Bum Valley Park, which will extend the recently opened Loanhead to Straiton path under the Edinburgh City By-Pass and into South Edinburgh.

We have also been working with the City of Edinburgh Council to begin signing Family Network Cycle Routes, each of which will be assigned a route number. The blue direction signs used will be similar to those used for the National Cycle Network, but with route numbers in a green square. The first route is about to be signed linking Middle Meadow Walk and The University of Edinburgh King's Buildings Campus.

Free. Clean. Green.

Few people would say that they don't care about the environment, don't want to get fit or don't care about the damage traffic is doing to their communities – but what's the answer? The humble bike: it's the greenest machine on the road, and Sustrans is doing everything it can to help people cycle more.

Sustrans developed the National Cycle Network and we're sure you love it as much as we do – but it's just the start of our journey to better travel.

Help us provide everyone with a greener way to travel. If you care about the environment and want to be part of the solution, you should support Sustrans. Together we can change the world, one mile at a time.

Photo: Ricki Evans/Sustrans

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