

Spokesworker is an occasional ("roughly monthly") news sheet, with stop-press news of forthcoming events, and of road, traffic and planning matters. It is not automatically sent to all members. A copy is enclosed if we are writing to you anyway, and copies are handed out at working group meetings. You can make sure to get a copy by sending us 10 or so stamped addressed envelopes. Spokesworker also appears on our Internet web site - to be notified of such updates by email, contact spokesATspokes.org.uk.

BUDGET 2010-11

Negotiations on the Scottish government's 2010-11 budget have started in earnest, and continue till just after the New Year. Spokes has made a major submission, proposing like last year a **£20m cycle projects fund** on top of existing investment.

We suggest it would be paid for by a small reduction in the **increase** in the trunk roads budget. Astonishingly, our proposal would **double existing cycling investment** and yet would **reduce the trunk road budget by less than 2%!!** - indeed £20m would only be a small dent in the £233m **increase** in the trunk road budget from £930m in 08/09 to £1153 in 10/11. [Note in fairness that these figures include maintenance, they are not just road building - though the maintenance figures also put cyclist route maintenance into perspective!] **Even with our proposal, total cycling investment would be equivalent to less than 2% of the £2500m total Scottish transport budget.**

Last year we were near to success - the Parliament's all-party **Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change committee** recommended increased funding for Active Travel (walking and cycling) - and they specifically asked the government to consider the Spokes proposal as a way of doing this. Unfortunately, the **Finance Committee** didn't back this up - partly due to (we feel) misleading comments from Cabinet Secretary John Swinney MSP [see our submission if you want the gory details!] **Since last year a great deal has happened to strengthen our case further** [see our submission] - so another big effort is worthwhile.

Please help by writing to/ emailing your MSPs soon. An easy way to find them is at www.WriteToThem.com - or see back page of any recent Spokes bulletin. Put the case to them for increased cycle investment. **Ask them to speak to their party Transport and Finance spokespersons, and ask that their party makes it a condition of supporting the budget.** Remember that the SNP is a minority government and can't get its budget through without support from some of the other parties. **See the Oct 24 news item on our website for more details and a link to our submission.**

SMALL MONEY HERE!!

Cycling Innovation Fund - Have you ideas/enthusiasm for an innovative project to boost bike use in your local area, workplace, or elsewhere? You can apply to this fund - **by 30 Nov** - for a grant up to £5000. It looks bureaucratic, but don't be put off if you've a good idea - Spokes members got money last year for promotional events in Haddington area. If you've an idea for your local area we'd be pleased to email other members in your area to see if any would join you in setting up and running the project. All ideas will be considered: stalls, signing, door-to-door, schools, workplace, etc, etc. cyclingscotland.org/communitycyclingfund.aspx.

Small grants to Community Groups - URGENT - Tue 3 Nov Drop in 6-8pm. Info about funds/grants for community projects - which could cover cycling ideas. *Includes:* Awards for All, Scottish Community Foundation, Waste Aware, Lloyds TSB Foundation and others. St Serf's Parish Church, 280 Ferry Road. More info - christine.liddle@edinburgh.gov.uk 529 5050. If possible register in advance [not essential]. Refreshments provided.

SNIPPETS

Bush Estate - One of our competition winners asks us to give a plug to Bush Estate Bike User group ... tinyurl.com/bikebush.

'Sorry Mate, I Didn't See You' - if this is a familiar refrain, you may be interested in the new CTC site www.stop-smidsy.org.uk.

FOR YOUR DIARY

See Spokes Bulletin 105. Important dates are summarised below.

Nov 19 Spokes Autumn Public Meeting - Future of Princes St - chaired by BBC presenter Lesley Riddoch

The two next events are to help bring pressure on world leaders at the December Copenhagen climate conference.

Dec 5 Climate Change March Glasgow www.the-wave.org.uk

Dec 6 Ride Planet Earth www.rideplanetearth.org. Our Sunday Ride joins in - **See Spokes 105 - Book your lunch by 20 Nov.**

Jun 28-Jul 1, 2010 Towards Carfree Cities IX world conference in York. www.worldcarfree.net/conference

SPOKES INTERNAL

FACEBOOK / TWITTER

One of our members has created a Spokes Facebook page. We're also twittering - follow us at twitter.com/SpokesLothian.

BIKE PARKING IN FLATS & TENEMENTS

We're planning a factsheet on this - if you've useful ideas, experience or knowledge email mknottenbelt1@googlemail.com.

We've heard of a new system for fitting to a wall inside your flat, the Cycloc [www.Cycloc.com]. It looks interesting - does anyone have experience? It has been suggested Spokes or some other body might take orders and request a discount, but we'd need some hard evidence before considering looking into this.

CYCLING FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

We're also considering a factsheet on this topic, as we get occasional queries. Please email ideas or interest to Spokes.

LEAFLET BIKES AT YOUR WORK & ELSEWHERE

Many Spokes members get a pile of each Bulletin to leaflet parked bikes at work. In some places that's not allowed - but if so try a leaflet-dispenser. One member says, "I fixed a cut-back envelope onto a pillar at our bike park. The envelope says *please take one.*" Email us if you'd like regular supplies (3 times a year) for bikes at your work - or in shopping areas, or anywhere with bikes!! Also get in touch any time you need a one-off supply - e.g. if you're involved in a relevant conference.

UK CYCLE CAMPAIGN NETWORK

Spokes has bid to host the Autumn 2010 UK CCN *Cyclenation* meeting. It will be 10 years since last held in Scotland. In that time much has happened - we are keen to show our achievements and learn from other UK groups. If you have ideas/comments/interest about this, contact imaxwellATgn.apc.org.

CAN IT BE TRUE ??

BOTANICS BIKE PARKING (NOT) We've had complaints about bike parking at the new Botanics building - visitor bike parking at the west has deteriorated seriously. A member said, *"the bland green grass should have bike racks against the North-facing slate wall at the South of the Main entrance"*. **Rumour has it that the architects don't think parked bikes look nice.**

It's really important to have bike parking which is both visible and convenient. People who come by bike anyway will be annoyed but will search out somewhere, even if on railings some way away, but visible bike parking near the entrance means that people who come by car will see they could cycle next time.

If you use the Botanics, please do something about this!! Contact the Regius Keeper (i.e. the Boss), Stephen Blackmore and Head of Visitor Services, Alan Bennell ... S.Blackmore@rbge.org.uk and A.Bennell@rbge.org.uk. Send us any useful replies.

POST OFFICE BIKES TO BE SCRAPPED?? CAN IT BE TRUE??

guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/oct/24/postal-worker-blog-innovation-idiocy

"We are all going to be issued with electric trolleys. Bikes are obviously not "modern" enough. So the entire stock of Royal Mail bicycles are to be scrapped. ... The advantage of a bike is that it can be ridden, it can be pushed; the bikes at each office can be maintained by one person with minimal expertise (and anyway, Royal Mail bikes are almost unbreakable); they can carry a lot of weight, are easy to ride, and are generally a simple and dependable way of moving volumes of mail ..."

NEW FORTH ROAD BRIDGE – A local action group, **BRIGS**, has been set up to concentrate on the effect of the planned bridge and its associated big road developments on local accessibility and travel – with special emphasis on cycling and walking. This is a vital matter if the bridge does get built - and also helps show the local problems that it will cause. Here's a snippet of their email to us, "The proposals (as we have seen them) make cycling more hazardous, may increase pollution, and certainly don't encourage cycling. **One statement in a Transport Scotland document on community severance suggests that children who have to cross the new approach road to get to school will not be adversely affected because they travel to school by car.**" The group wants your interest, ideas and support. www.brigs.btik.com

FAST CHANGE DO-ABLE!

We may think of the US as car-dominated, but New York has created 330 km of bike lanes in the past 3 years and is planning to create 80km every year until 2030 [New York Times].

In a particularly dramatic change, cyclists using Manhattan Bridge soared from 800 a day in 2005 to 2600 in 2009, thanks to a new 2-way bike route. Work on the route followed serious injury to a senior bike campaigner, and big rallies calling for action.

References: tinyurl.com/n3utwq and tinyurl.com/yc4pcy9.

ENVIRONMENT

SCOTLAND'S 'ZERO WASTE' PLAN

"The Scottish Government has adopted Zero Waste as our goal - eliminating unnecessary use of raw materials; sustainable design; resource efficiency and waste prevention; re-using products where possible; and recovering value from products when they reach the end of their lives." It seems that a number of ideas in earlier documents, including deposits on glass bottles etc, have been dropped. [Spokes members report less glass on roads and paths in countries and US States where deposits are used]. To comment: see www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations. **Ends 13.11.09.**

CLIMATE CHANGE ACT – SCCS BRIEFING PAPER

Scotland's hugely ambitious Climate Change Bill is now an act. A briefing document from the coalition which fought for a tough Act is at www.stopclimatechaos.org/files/docs/SCCS-Act-Summary.pdf.

10:10 CLIMATE CHANGE CAMPAIGN

Join Edinburgh Uni, the UK Cabinet, the Shadow Cabinet, the Science Museum, football clubs, schools, 100s of celebrities and literally tens of thousands of individuals by pledging to cut your carbon emissions 10% in 2010. To sign up, go to www.1010uk.org. For more background, see www.guardian.co.uk/environment/10-10. To stay in touch, email adtdlist@1010uk.org.

PUBLIC MEETING

Spokes Public Meeting with Richard Armitage, 17 Sep 2009

Notes taken by Peter Hawkins

Richard Armitage is an independent consultant on sustainable transport and offered to come and speak to us on how Edinburgh's 2020 target for 15% cycling modal share might be achieved, and on the experience of Groningen, a top European cycling city. Spokes also arranged for him to meet Council Transport Convener Cllr Gordon Mackenzie and senior officials the next day.

He started by pointing out that cycling in Edinburgh has risen in recent years, from ~1.5% to ~4% commuter share, but no-one has researched why. This contradicts the wider trend in Scotland and the UK, where cycle levels were static or falling.

Groningen, NL, has about 180,000 inhabitants, a large student population, an economic powerhouse. Long-term investment in cycling has had positive economic results. Modal share is 37%. Ten other northern Europe cities have modal shares 23% or more. This creates parking problems – for bikes! (slides). Road layout – footway and cycleway, segregated, both sides of carriageway – in wide modern streets. Where narrower, foot and cycle share space. Accidents are avoided because eye-contact is possible (c.f. cars).

Keeping cars out of city centre is common in Europe but not in Britain. Only buses and taxis allowed. At transport hubs, up to 10,000 bikes are parked, sometimes in 2-storey bike parks.

Bike routes need to be *integral* and *continuous*. Signage is important (slides). RA likes time rather than distance on signs. Great advantage of cycling: chance to socialise, flirt etc en route.

Conversion to cycling started in Groningen in 1969-72 when political decision taken to keep cars out of centre. By 1976, 42% of transport budget was being spent on cycling facilities. From 1989-2000 they spent about £15m p.a. (equivalent to £210m for city the size of Manchester). There are no quick fixes – political decisions, long-term continuous investment are the key factors.

Progress (lack of) in the UK is due, RA thinks, to (1) poor leadership (maybe male-dominated political scene?) (2) scraps from transport funding (3) cycling officers and engineers low status/salaries/support. And no big money in cycling – cf car industry, oil, rail tickets (4) media bias – journalists love their car to get to that imaginary once-in-a-lifetime scoop [they might reach it quicker by bike!]; hence cycling reportage is often just silly.

Missing ingredients: lack of ambition/vision; even campaign groups can get too focussed on the specific; need strategic plan for cycle routes which are *continuous*, and large-scale investment, over 20 years and more; marketing at 'car'-type levels; agency collaboration, eg transport and health; and a sense of urgency. Slides of marketing opportunities – huge poster in Brighton shows car = zero exercise, alongside bike = daily fitness, strategically located at level crossing where cars are stopped; another by Edin Bike Co-op showing guy with flab – *got a car* against slim guy – *got a bike*, on backs of buses, again where drivers see it.

Questions and discussion:

Q Aren't attitudes now changing? – eg involvement of Sky (Skyrides in Glasgow), Asda (Bike Club), Hoy and the Olympics, Alan Sugar [?], police and paramedics on bikes.

A. Yes – but some misfires, eg Bikes for Ikea staff ended up for sale on eBay; David Cameron – a car behind as back-up!

The evening then turned to general discussion

Cycling and social class/low income - poorer people confined to one mode, too often the car – can't afford bus/train if already own a car. Middle classes more flexible. Glasgow East End – low car ownership but aspiration is to own car, not bike. Cycling is self-reinforcing – the more who do it, the more it's seen as normal.

Common explanation (Spokes) for cycling increase in Edin is prominent, highly visible cycle lanes and ASLs, but other factors could be: pro-active officials like David Begg and Andrew Burns; compactness of the city; good public transport means no need to own car; successful car club; city centre area largely inhabited by Classes A, B, C1; bike-aware residents from Europe; educated population aware of environment and flexible in habits (this also a function of wealth, see above).

Bristol plans £22m over next 3 years, aims to double all cycling indicators; will ensure all officers are experienced cyclists. RA believes very important to get decision-makers on bikes, even if only to experience it – some will be 'born again'. He suggests bike-buddy scheme for all on £50,000+ salaries.

Where resources are limited, a strategy is to focus on one specific corridor each year and make it superb – rather than current 'buggins' turn for the money' approach. This could be a corridor, or a neighbourhood. When one gets it, they'll all want it.

In Aylesbury, cycling was boosted (with limited budget) by linking up and publicising existing facilities – emphasis on routes to town centre, each route given a (gemstone) name; signage, maps and other soft measures. Cycling rose from very low to 11%. Thanks to the cycling increase, a key bridge for cyclists will now be built – unthinkable 4 years ago.

Overall - an excellent meeting, many thoughtful/original ideas.