

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 DISASTER??

Note: these are early days in the Budget debate, and not all is yet clear - this article is based on our current understanding. Nothing is final till Parliament votes on the budget in February. Until then there is great scope for lobbying for changes to the draft budget.

On Nov 17 Finance Secretary John Swinney MSP presented the 2011/12 Scottish Budget to Parliament. The budget has been reported as good for active travel (walking/ cycling), but that is sleight of hand – in fact currently it is looking very bad.

THE 2011/12 BUDGET – WHY IT IS MISLEADING

The government increased the budget line for *Sustainable and Active Travel* from £21.2m in 10/11 to £25.1m for 11/12, which is of course welcome. This is the basis on which cycle investment has 'risen.' Indeed, some Scottish environmental charities issued press releases referring to a 'rise' in active travel investment.

But John Swinney failed to mention two important points – which Spokes consistently highlights in our funding survey ...

First - Cycling investment comes from more than one budget line. This year's budget omits the CWSS fund (Cycling, Walking, Safer Streets) - and this loss this greatly outweighs the above 'rise.'

Second – the budget gives 'top level' figures, not complete detail. Thus little over half the *Sustainable and Active Travel* budget line goes to active travel - much goes to low carbon motor vehicles (LCVs), green buses, eco-drive, etc. It is rumoured that £3m of this year's ~£4m rise will go to LCVs, only £1m to active travel.

DETAILED COMMENTARY

The table on p7 of Spokes 108 shows the main sources making up total cycling investment in Scotland, with the 3 biggest in 10/11 being **Sustrans** (£7.7m), **CWSS** (we estimate £4.5m to cycling) and **councils' own discretionary capital** (estimate £2.5m). How will the budget impact on these 3 major funding sources?

A. CWSS – Cycling, Walking, Safer Streets

CWSS was introduced by former Labour Transport Minister **Sarah Boyack MSP** (now a Spokes member) some 10 years ago, and has been the most stable and consistent cycle funding source ever since. Currently it is £9m p.a., given to councils in proportion to population. Of this 40%-50% is likely to go to cycling this year. Unlike most cycle funding, CWSS is known well in advance, allowing cycle officers to plan properly [schemes often need consultation, Orders, land acquisition, etc]. Also importantly, many councils (most?) use CWSS as 'match funding' to attract money from other bodies like Sustrans or British Waterways.

DISASTER FOR SCOTLAND AND FOR EDINBURGH

Loss of CWSS would be a major problem: almost certainly several councils would invest zero in cycling, and others like Edinburgh would suffer major setbacks. Indeed Edinburgh Council Committee Report on the Active Travel Action Plan states, "Any withdrawal of Scottish Government CWSS funding is likely to have serious implications ... the ambitious cycling targets are unlikely to be met in this scenario."

CWSS is *ring-fenced* – the council can only use it for cycling, walking, safer streets. But the government and COSLA (the body representing Scottish councils) wish to scrap all ring-fencing and leave spending decisions entirely up to councils. Our survey shows clearly, as do council cycle officer comments, that if CWSS is scrapped, or not ring-fenced, many councils will put little or nothing into cycling [and thus also will be unable to attract extra money through match-funding – a double whammy].

Though the draft budget omits CWSS final decisions depend on government and COSLA. Spokes has already written to COSLA and will also lobby through Parliament's TICC Cttee.

B. Sustainable and Active Travel

As explained above, this budget line rises (though it seems only £1m of the £4m rise will go to active travel). This money is used by the government's Sustainable Transport Team to fund Sustrans, Cycling Scotland and some of the 'other' sources in the table on p7 of Spokes 108. Thus Sustrans 2011/12 funding looks secure, and may even rise slightly. However, Sustrans currently gets match-funding from councils for its work with them, thus doubling its investment - and councils will be much less likely to do that if CWSS is scrapped. Hence even if Sustrans does get slightly more from the government, they will be able to achieve less with it.

C. Council Capital

This is the general capital which councils can spend on anything – schools, transport, whatever. We estimate this contributes some £2.5m cycling investment this year, 10/11. However, total 2011/12 council capital is to be cut by 18% (19.5% in real terms), which would proportionately cut cycling investment to around £2m – and it could be much more as some councils will see cycling as a luxury compared to school buildings etc.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Our top target must be to save CWSS [though we also have other aims – see back page of Spokes 108]. The government has set a 10% target for cycle use by 2020, yet if CWSS is scrapped then total cycling investment will be badly hit – and it is already far too low, under 1% of total transport spend. Councils like Edinburgh, which have set their own targets to contribute to the government target, will be left in the lurch – see quote in the box opposite.

Please write to some or all of the following...

♦ **Your MSPs** – find them at www.writetothem.com. Ask them to raise your concern with Finance Secretary John Swinney and with the Parliament's TICC committee, and to tell you the outcome.

♦ **The Transport Convener** of your council – tell them your concern about loss of CWSS and ask them to raise this at COSLA. Only write to the transport convener for **your own council**...

Edinburgh gordon.mackenzie@edinburgh.gov.uk Cllr Gordon Mackenzie
East Lothian pmclennan@eastlothian.gov.uk Cllr Paul McLennan
Midlothian russell.imrie@midlothian.gov.uk Cllr Russell Imrie
West Lothian Martyn.Day@westlothian.gov.uk Cllr Martyn Day

♦ **If you know either of the two Green MSPs** send an email reminding them that it was their efforts which saved CWSS in the first SNP budget, and urging them to do the same again.

IT'S WORTH TRYING! - PREVIOUS SUCCESSES

We have tried similar lobbying over the last 3 years, and despite mostly failing there have been 2 very significant successes ...

a. **The SNP's first budget** tried to scrap CWSS. But many people lobbied hard on cycle funding, the Green MSPs then made CWSS a condition for supporting the budget, and it was saved.

b. **In last year's budget** the lobbying was intense, with many emails from members, a detailed Spokes submission and more from other groups. The Parliament's Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee (TICC) strongly supported increased investment. Although the govt refused to change the budget, the pressure was so strong that when they received more funds later in the year from the UK Chancellor they allocated over £3m of this to cycling investment, under the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland.

BUDGET DOCUMENTS

The budget and associated documents can all be found at... www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Finance/18127.

A brief commentary on the budget, and how it varies from last year, can be found in SPICe Briefing SB 10-80 at... www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/research/date/index.htm.

CYCLINATION

Below is part of the Spokes presentation at the Cyclination UK conference in Edinburgh. For other conference talks, reports and pictures see the 17 Nov news item on Spokes website. Once again many thanks to all who helped with organisation, accommodation and on the day – notably Ian Maxwell and Rosie Telford.



the Lothian Cycle Campaign

- About Spokes [very briefly]
- Scotland [funding context]
- Edinburgh [good & less good]
- Edinburgh v. London [notes]

WHEN WAS SPOKES CREATED?



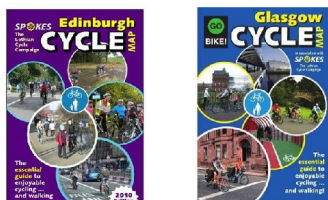
SPOKES BULLETIN

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SPOKES MAPS

100,000 sold!!



SOME TECHNIQUES WE USE

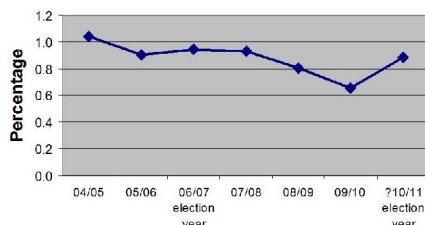
- **Be active praising the good:** don't just criticise the bad. Let the council/ govt see you're useful!!
- **Seize & seek opportunities:** [e.g. planning applications; presence of top people] ... i.e. don't solely concentrate on predetermined campaigns
- **Use time well:** e.g. designing a map or bulletin is fun but useless unless you also distribute widely!!
- **Encourage members to lobby as individuals:** notify them who to contact, when, and about what – let politicians/officials feel a wide constituency
- **Consistent pressure:** results can take time.

Scottish cycle funding from all main sources - Spokes annual survey [14 years]

“the most detailed and comprehensive overview of annual public sector cycle expenditure”

Scottish Parliament Information Centre [SPICe]
Briefing 10/62 – Cycling in Scotland

Scottish Cycling investment - total as % of SG transport budget



SURVEY – A CONCLUSION

- Cycling investment by councils from their own capital resources is consistently low.
- Cycling investment is largely from national funding allocations dedicated to cycling [e.g. Sustrans, CWSS] or to transport [e.g. RTPs].
- Therefore to achieve widespread local success, national lobbying is vital [as well as local].
- National lobbying far easier for local groups in Scotland than in England. Much smaller population - everyone closer to government.

SURVEY CONCLUSION [ctd]

For example, Edinburgh Council committee report on the Active Travel Action Plan...

“Any withdrawal of Scottish Government CWSS funding is likely to have serious implications ... the ambitious cycling targets are unlikely to be met in this scenario”

Spokes <-> Edinburgh Council

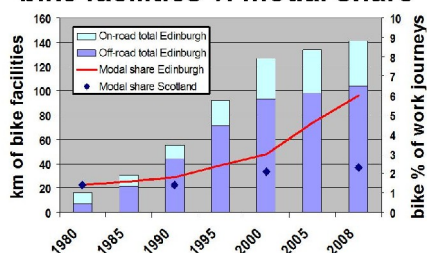
Generally constructive relationship:

We praise the good as well as highlighting problems - so our ideas are respected & we get consulted

Example contacts:

- Quarterly Cycle Forum - chaired by Transport Convener
- Active Travel Action Plan - Spokes was on the Board overseeing preparation of the plan
- Many smaller contacts - formal & informal

Edinburgh - bike facilities v. modal share



SPOKES

spokes.org.uk/wordpress

Edinburgh – the Mound



A great Edinburgh street and a great bike facility!!

- Cyclists don't have to stop and start behind steep uphill traffic [often lorries & buses]
- Pedestrians/tourists now further from cars and lorries and can enjoy the street
- Note peak-only restriction: later lobbying jointly with Lothian Buses achieved 24-hour parking ban [despite opposition by Director]



Crossing Princes Street at the Mound

- Vital N-S crossing - and part of ATAP 'family network'
- Layout makes it almost impossible to cross tramlines from N to S at safe 60deg.
- Crashes Feb & Oct (1 injury)
- Spokes proposal (shown) rejected as only one traffic lane each way [though Mound was totally closed in 2009]
- Discussions for 2 years - no other obvious solution

London – superhighways

- **NB: I speak from a position of ignorance!!**
- **CTC/Cyclination response** ... "we have doubts about the value of the actual facilities ... too often the blue lanes are only 1.5m wide ... give up at approaches to junctions ... the reality is disappointing" [CTC Cycle Digest]
- **Public response** ... "early estimates show there is an overall 25% increase in cycling" [Carlton Reid blog]

Bike Facility Questions

Three big questions about a new bike facility - but which is most important?

- Does it significantly raise the number of cyclists [i.e. is it liked & used by the public]
- Does it reduce [or not raise] casualty rates and numbers? [note that more cyclists often reduces rates]
- Does it meet all criteria for design perfection?

Spokes argues for top design - but nonetheless we welcome [albeit critically] a scheme meeting A and B even if C isn't perfect. [e.g. The Mound lanes - not perfect width(?) but hugely valued!!]

Boris bikes – possible here?

- Seems very successful in London [and many cities – though some problems e.g. Cardiff – bad cycling conditions in centre?]
- Tenement bike storage problems might give extra market in Edinburgh
- Edinburgh Council study concluded a full scheme too hard to finance, also 'streetscape' issues [and would enough people accept Barclays - or RBS - bikes?]
- New problem – Princes St tramlines – two reported crashes a month, yet city centre would be the heart of a Boris-type scheme to be used by many novice cyclists. *Promised consultation on Princes St future/ possible cyclistroute still awaited!*

Importance of local 'power' context

• Top politicians and officers can have a big effect – by detailed attention and by setting priorities. It's often the person not the party. It's a question of luck who is there!

- London – mayors (KL + BJ) highly supportive of cycling over last decade [though Boroughs vary].
- Edinburgh – local context more varied in recent years: example on next slide!!!

Importance of local 'power' context

It's often the person not the party

Example: Edinburgh Council under Lib Dem/SNP
LibDem Manifesto... "A Model Cycle-Friendly City"

The reality...

Years 1&2 – no cycling initiatives, maybe slight regression

...then, same party, but new Director and Convener

Years 3&4 – Active Travel Action Plan + detailed attention

e.g. priority rules for road & facility maintenance being revised

e.g. Spokes storage project – convener asks what council can do