

*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](mailto:spokesATspokes.org.uk).*

## WEANS ON WHEELS

**Want to try out trailers, child seats, tag-alongs and bikes?**

During the summer The Bike Station will demonstrate such equipment every **Wednesday 12-2pm**, at the **Pavilion Cafe, Jawbone Walk, The Meadows Edinburgh**. You can also drop in at the Bike Station (250 Causewayside) on **Friday afternoons, 1-4pm**, for demonstrations, advice, child bike sales, and to arrange free family bike training. [www.thebikestation.org.uk/edinburgh](http://www.thebikestation.org.uk/edinburgh).

The Bike Station and Spokes are working together on this campaign to provide practical advice and training to support families into everyday cycling, especially families with younger children who cannot yet cycle independently. The Spokes factsheet, *How to be a Cycling Family*, is available free from the Bike Station, from Spokes stalls at summer events, and to download from our 'Commuting with Kids' web page... [www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/downloads/advice/commuting-with-kids](http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/downloads/advice/commuting-with-kids).

## BIKEWEEK.ORG.UK

**June 22 SPOKES BIKE BREAKFAST** 8-10am, City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh. More info - see May 28 news item at [www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk). The following politicians are coming, and other councillors are sure to be there too...

**Clr Gordon Mackenzie** [LibDem, Council Transport convener]

**Clr Lesley Hinds** [Council Labour transport spokesperson]

**Marco Biagi** [SNP MSP for Edinburgh Central]

**Sarah Boyack** [Labour MSP on Lothians List; Spokes member]

**Alison Johnstone** [Green MSP on Lothians List]

*Please introduce yourself to the politicians and tell them what you would like to see from them – the more people who do this the better.* If lots of others want to talk to them, don't hog them for too long; but if they're looking lonely don't leave them alone!

**June 18-25 DOCTOR BIKE** Loads of opportunities all over the city to get your bike checked free by the Bike Station. For times and places, see [www.thebikestation.org.uk](http://www.thebikestation.org.uk) then click on *Edinburgh Bike Week Dr Bikes* in the left hand column [lots of other interesting things to click there too!!]

## TRAMLINE TRAUMAS

Spokes Bulletin 110 reports the independent interim Princes St safety audit which vindicates many Spokes concerns. Assuming the tram is not cancelled, and that the planned Princes St closure (now postponed to September) still happens, we are told that the main issues in the report will be tackled during the closure.

However Spokes has urged that **easy items** (such as the metal plates with high sides, and the ends of the tramlines) be tackled at once. We were told, *"As the safety of the public is of the utmost importance to both the contractors and the Council, we are in the process of seeing what works can be undertaken as an interim measure prior to the main works on Princes Street in September."*

Our Bulletin 110 article was not clear enough about the **setts [cobblestones]** – *we do not mean they will definitely be removed when Princes St is closed.* The Safety Audit recommends removal (except between the tramlines) but we strongly suspect that the Council Streetscape Section will fight hard to keep them, using their own (in our view spurious) safety arguments. *Our case will be helped if concerned users contact councillors asking that the safety audit recommendation for removal of setts is acted on.*

## SPOKES BULLETIN 110

We've got lots of copies left – contact us if you can use some, and say how many – at your work, conferences, stalls, or cycle round local streets to leaflet parked bikes - the opportunities are endless!

## PLANNING & PATHS

**East Lothian Local Transport Strategy** East Lothian Council is in the first stage of preparing its new LTS and has produced an 'issues' document for consultation. It has a good set of objectives, which need support. *If you live in or visit East Lothian* please complete the online questionnaire at [www.eastlothian.gov.uk/lts](http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/lts).

**Traffic Orders by Edinburgh Council** can be found at...

[www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/1523/transport\\_and\\_streets/431/traffic\\_orders](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/1523/transport_and_streets/431/traffic_orders)

These control many features of the road environment, such as speed limits, double-yellows, making pavements shared-use, etc. Each order has a closing date, and you can send objections, comments or queries to [trafficorders@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:trafficorders@edinburgh.gov.uk). If you are ever browsing these pages and see anything you would like taken up by Spokes Planning Group, please contact us urgently – but *please also submit your own individual comment/objection*, making sure to include your name and postal address.

**Edmondstone Exhibitions** See article in Spokesworker 30.5.11 [[www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk), *spokesworker* tab] about this massive planning application between Old Dalkeith Road and The Wisp. Additional exhibition/ consultation events have now been set up...

*June 23, 3-8pm, Hayes Business Centre, Hay Ave. Craigmillar*

*June 27, 2-4.45 and 6.15-8pm, Goodtrees Neighbourhood Centre, Moredunvale Av, Ferniehill*

**Chancelot Path** (Edinburgh, FiveWays to Warriston allotments)

An active badger sett has been found, so the upgrading work here has been halted until after the badger mating season - end of June?

## SNIPPETS

**Bike Station Innertube map now online** [www.innertubemap.com](http://www.innertubemap.com). Interactive, with stories, videos, audio clips, etc

**Spokes envelope deliveries – online help** If you're one of our delivery agents, and enjoy computing, type in the postcodes of all your envelopes and you can get an optimised delivery round from [www.gebweb.net/optimap](http://www.gebweb.net/optimap). Whether it's optimised for bike trips seems unlikely, but could be fun if you enjoy that sort of thing!

**Sustrans National Cycle Network app** Access over 25,000 miles of UK walking and cycling network mapping with the National Cycle Network app - created from the Sustrans OS-based online mapping facility and designed to help people make more of their everyday journeys on foot or by bike. The app has been funded jointly by the Scottish Government and Sustrans. <http://sustrans-info.org.uk/6EB-FRQ8-1570UV-64ZGL-1/c.aspx>

**Putting: 50% discount** If you arrive at Kingsfield golf centre, Linlithgow, by bike (even from the station!) you'll get 50% off at their family putting green. Bike hire also available [no discount]. [www.kingsfieldgolf.com/mountain-bike-tours-kingsfield.html](http://www.kingsfieldgolf.com/mountain-bike-tours-kingsfield.html) 01506 671607.

**Pronto Pedal Power** New social-enterprise Edinburgh delivery service by cargo bike – please consider using them, and send them any helpful ideas or leads. [www.prontopedalpower.co.uk](http://www.prontopedalpower.co.uk).

**Friends of the Earth Scotland** ask you to sponsor them on the Sep 11 Pedal for Scotland ride. <http://foe-scotland.org.uk/pedalforScotland>

**World CarFree News** recently revamped monthly online news service: sign up for a free subscription at [www.worldcarfree.net/bulletin](http://www.worldcarfree.net/bulletin).

# 'IN THE BIKE SEAT'

The *European Cyclists' Federation* recently interviewed **Professor John Pucher**, a world expert on how towns, cities and countries succeed in raising bike use. We reprint the interview here [slightly shortened]: the original is at [www.ecf.com/4478\\_1](http://www.ecf.com/4478_1).

John Pucher is a professor in the School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, NJ, USA. His many papers on cycling/transport are at [www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher](http://www.policy.rutgers.edu/faculty/pucher) [click 'publications']. They include *Infrastructure, Programs and Policies to increase Bicycling: an International Review* - on which the Q/A below is based. Over the past 15 years, Pucher's research has focused on walking and cycling, and what North American and Australian cities can learn from Europe to improve the safety, convenience, and feasibility of these non-motorized modes for daily travel, to boost physical activity and enhance public health.

**Q: Your study begins, 'Cycling is healthy.' How healthy is it, and how far should policy makers consider cycling?**

**A:** Cycling is very healthy. That is the unanimous conclusion of dozens of scientific studies in the public health and medical literature. The health benefits of cycling far exceed the traffic dangers of cycling, even in countries such as the USA and Australia, where cycling conditions are less safe than in Denmark and the Netherlands. What might surprise some people is that cycling provides significant mental and social health benefits in addition to the physical health benefits. But those physical health benefits have been better documented: improved cardiovascular health, reduced risk of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and some forms of cancer. The health benefits of cycling also yield economic benefits in terms of reduced health care costs, and several studies show that those reduced costs greatly exceed the costs of building cycling facilities to promote more cycling. In short, the health benefits of cycling offer a very important justification for widespread public support and government financing of cycling infrastructure and programs.

Policy makers are already paying more attention to these enormous health benefits of cycling, but still not nearly enough. *Unfortunately, some countries are moving in the wrong direction. Cycling England, for example, was recently abolished by the British Government due to funding cuts.* There is also a risk that budgets cuts in the USA might force reductions in cycling programs. But in most countries, there is increasing support for cycling due to the wide range of health benefits, on top of the well known environmental, economic, and social benefits of cycling: reduced traffic congestion, noise, air pollution and energy use, for example, by shifting travel from the unsustainable private car to cycling. Since studies show that cycling promotion costs a fraction of the huge subsidies required for highways and car parking, investing in cycling facilities is the ideal way for governments to save money, especially in a budget crisis.

**Q: The helmets question: what does your study reveal?**

**A:** There has not been nearly enough research on the actual benefits of helmet use, and the evidence is somewhat contradictory. But it is clear that helmet laws are not the answer: they discourage cycling so much that they offset whatever benefits helmets might have in preventing certain kinds of head injuries.

Motor vehicles are unquestionably the most important source of traffic danger for cyclists, and the key to improving cycling safety is lowering car speeds, restricting car access to residential neighborhoods, and training drivers to respect the legal rights of cyclists to ride on the roads, and to pro-actively drive in a way that avoids endangering cyclists. The much better cycling safety rate in the Netherlands is largely due to much better training and testing of car drivers in that country, leading to Dutch motorists consciously watching out for cyclists. [*Spokes note: also 'strict liability' - see Spokes 110, p8 & spokesworker 30.5.11*] In comparison, most American and Australian motorists seem to object to cyclists being on the road, and often endanger them, either deliberately, by trying to intimidate them, or inadvertently, out of ignorance about how to safely share the road. Motorists who endanger cyclists should lose their licenses and be incarcerated when they deliberately force cyclists off the road or intimidate them.

**Q: To get more people on their bikes, what are the 'must-haves' in terms of cycling infrastructure?**

**A:** No city in Europe or North America has achieved high cycling levels without an extensive network of well-integrated bike lanes and paths giving separation from motor traffic. Bikeways are the trademark of bike-oriented cities in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany. Bike paths and lanes must be combined with intersection measures such as advance stop lines, lane markings, extra turning lanes, and advance green lights for cyclists.

Physical separation from motor vehicle traffic is crucial for enabling risk-averse and/or vulnerable groups to cycle. Virtually all surveys report that separate cycling facilities are needed to encourage non-cyclists, especially for women, seniors, and children. Those traffic-sensitive groups have high rates of cycling in countries such as the Netherlands, Denmark, and Germany, with their extensive separate cycling facilities, but low rates in countries where most cycling is on roads with heavy traffic and no separation for cyclists. Separate cycling facilities are a crucial first step to increasing cycling and making it socially inclusive.

**Q: Tell us a bit about recent global cycling trends...**

**A:** Cycling is increasing in almost all cities of Western Europe, North America, and Australia. Some cities have experienced truly dramatic increases. From 1990 to 2008, the bicycle share of trips in Berlin rose from 5% to 13%, while serious cyclist injuries fell by 38%. From 1970 to 2005, the bicycle share of trips in Amsterdam rose from 25% to 37%, while serious bicyclist injuries fell by 40%. From 1975 to 2005, the bicycle share of trips in Copenhagen rose from 22% to 32%, while serious injuries fell by 60%. The bike share of trips roughly doubled in London, Paris, Lyon, Barcelona, and New York over the past decade.

Smaller cities also achieved growth in cycling. Freiburg, Germany almost doubled the bicycle share of trips from 15% in 1982 to 27% in 2007. Muenster, Germany raised its already high bike share of trips from 29% in 1982 to 38% in 2007. The bike mode share in Portland (Oregon) rose almost 6-fold between 1990 and 2009 (from 1.1% to 6.0%). Over the same period, the bike mode share roughly tripled in Chicago (0.3% to 1.0%), Minneapolis (1.6% to 4.3%), San Francisco (1.0% to 2.7%), and Washington (0.8% to 2.3%). Over the shorter period from 1996 to 2006, cycling levels more than doubled in the Canadian cities of Vancouver (1.7% to 3.7%), Montreal (1.0% to 2.4%), and Toronto (0.8% to 1.7%). Boulder, Colorado tripled its bike share of work commuters from 3.8% in 1980 to 12.3% in 2009.

In short, cycling is booming in many cities throughout the world, but much still needs to be done, especially in countries like the USA, Canada, and Australia, to restrict car use and reduce speed limits, especially in residential neighborhoods. Traffic calming of residential neighborhoods and car-free zones in the city center should be far more widely implemented in car-oriented countries. And motorist behavior must be improved through better training and enforcement of laws intended to protect cyclists.

**Q: What new research are you working on?**

**A:** Together with colleagues from four continents, I am working on a new book about cycling for MIT Press entitled: "*Cycling for Sustainable Transport: International Trends and Policies.*" It provides an up to date overview of cycling developments around the world, including bike sharing, bike parking, integration with public transport, health benefits, safety, infrastructure, cycling and women, cycling and children, and 25 detailed case studies of cycling in cities of all different sizes. We expect it to appear in print sometime in mid 2012, about a year from now.

## UK RESEARCH

The importance of widespread high quality infrastructure, to achieve very high levels of bike use, is also highlighted in recent UK research reported in the following articles...

[www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2011/jun/03/britons-unmoved-cycling-campaigns](http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2011/jun/03/britons-unmoved-cycling-campaigns)  
[www.bikehub.co.uk/news/sustainability/save-our-cities-build-for-bicycles-not-cars](http://www.bikehub.co.uk/news/sustainability/save-our-cities-build-for-bicycles-not-cars)