

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.

FOR YOUR DIARY

See diary in Spokes Bulletin 112. Also...

MAY 3 COUNCIL ELECTIONS...

[The Edinburgh City Council official election website is at... www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20183/scottish_local_government_election_2012]

See Spokes 112 [p3] for more on the May 3 council elections. One opportunity to lobby candidates is at public hustings...

March 29 Spokes Election Forum [time, place, details in Spokes Bulletin 112 and in Feb 18 news item at spokes.org.uk].

Apr 18 Wed Federation of Small Businesses + Evening News hustings 6-8pm, the Penthouse, Point Hotel, 34 Bread St. Mainly for questions relevant to small business. May need to book in advance - see www.fsb.org.uk/eastofscotland/edinburgh/events.

Apr 19 Thurs Leith Walk (ward 12) hustings 7-9.15pm, Broughton St Mary's Parish Church, Bellevue Crescent. *More info:* www.broughtonspurtle.org.uk/news/hustings-leith-walk-and-city-centre-dates

Apr 25 Wed City Centre (ward 11) Details as for Leith Walk ward above.

'STREETS AHEAD' SAFETY CAMPAIGN

See Spokes 112, p3 for more on this. April brings publicity to motorists and cyclists on **Advance Stop Lines**, followed by a period of enhanced enforcement on motorist ASL intrusion and cyclists red light running. June will highlight **HGV blind spots**, with advice to drivers and a real HGV for cyclists to check out.

There will be council, police, Spokes and other stalls, 12-2, at...

Apr 2 Mon: Council HQ, Market Street

Apr 3 Tues: Edinburgh Uni, George Square [+ TV & top officials]

Apr 4 Wed: Royal Infirmary

Apr 5 Thur: Edinburgh Uni, King's Buildings

Stalls etc are likely to include: Dr Bike, some council high-viz freebies, police security marking, Police Road Safety van.

Relevant websites...

spokes.org.uk : documents : advice : considerate-cycling.

streetsaheadedinburgh.org.uk Council campaign site [the cycling pictures cover only helmets! - even on pages such as *Network development* !! - we have complained; hopefully that will change by the time you read this].

SCIENCE FESTIVAL EDINBURGH

Edinburgh International Science Festival has *Science busking bikes* performing around Edinburgh. Each trike is full to the brim with explosive, messy, and down-right weird science experiments. From the power of friction to seeing how carbon capture could save the planet, each demo explains some of the most interesting science happening. Science has never been so entertaining, busking never so educational - though bikes are eternally brilliant!

More info: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/1539/town_centre_management/1447/town_centre_co-ordinators/4

Sat 24 Mar	Churchill Theatre	10:00 - 15:00
Sat 24 + Sun 25	Ocean Terminal	10:00 - 15:00
Sat 24 Mar	Nicolson Square	10:00 - 15:00
Sat 31 Mar + Sat 7 Apr	West End	11:00 - 15:00
Sat 31 Mar	St Mary Cathedral	10:00 - 15:00
Sat 31 Mar	Jubilee Gardens, Stockbridge	10:00 - 15:00
Sun 1 Apr	Gorgie Farm	11:00 - 15:00
Sat 7 Apr	High Street, South Queensferry	10:00 - 15:00
Sat 7 Apr	Portobello 9:30-13:30 (Brighton Pl) 13:30-16:30 (Town Hall)	
Sun 8th Apr	Portobello (Prom)?	All day

PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT

Spokes is supporting **Pedal on Parliament**, a grass-roots protest by concerned people from around Scotland. The event parallels a big April 28 rally by London Cycling Campaign. For the POP manifesto see www.pedalonparliament.org. The cycling investment statement, manifesto point 1, is based in part on Spokes research.

Final details of route and time are still to be decided, so please check their website. Currently expected to assemble 2-3pm at the Meadows (possibly with stalls etc); the probable route is then George IV Bridge - High St - Parliament; followed by a picnic.

SAT 28TH APRIL • 2PM • THE MEADOWS • EDINBURGH

PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT

Let's Make Cycling In Scotland SAFE For ALL

Let's make cycling in Scotland safe for all

WWW.PEDALONPARLIAMENT.ORG @POPCOTLAND #POP28

Please check www.pedalonparliament.org to confirm date + time

MORE NEWS/ACTIONS

RESPONSIBLE PARKING ALLIANCE

Joe Fitzpatrick MSP is introducing a Bill to end inconsiderate parking, including on pavements, at dropped kerbs and double-parking. The Bill is supported by the Responsible Parking Alliance, founded by **Living Streets** and including **Spokes**.

The Alliance says, "*Inconsiderate parking forces pedestrians onto the road and into the path of vehicles. It is a major barrier for people with visual or mobility impairments, wheelchair or mobility scooter users, families with pushchairs and cyclists. It can damage the pavement, creating additional costly obstacles.*"

Keith Irving 243 2646, 07817 883671 keith.irvingATlivingstreets.org.uk

LEITH WALK FUTURE

Leith Walk is in a very bad state due to the maintenance hiatus during the now aborted tram works. The Council has allocated around £3m to resurface and generally restore Leith Walk this autumn, after yet more utility works.

[ctd on p2]

Current plans are to restore the previous layout, with car parking more or less as it was, the downhill bus lane and uphill cycle lane. The cycle lane will be red, using the new red-chippings method [Spokes 112 p4]. Some in the council hope for more tram funding within 5-10 years, to implement the existing tram plans unchanged.

Leith Walk is a vital direct Leith-Edinburgh route, and needs much better cycling conditions - and a better pedestrian environment. A survey of nearly 100 people at a Spokes public meeting identified Leith Walk as a top corridor needing high quality cycling conditions [spokes.org.uk : documents : odds& ends : public meetings : 23.3.10]. In the early days of tram planning we tried very hard, but unsuccessfully, to get a more bike-friendly layout, with a report by a Dutch bike/tram specialist consultant [spokes.org.uk : documents : public transport : tram : 0907].

Despite all this, there are no plans for more welcoming cycling conditions beyond the resurfacing and reinstating the uphill lane - not even at danger points such as uphill at London Rd roundabout.

However, pressure is growing in the local community for a complete rethink on Leith Walk, with so much money allocated. This resulted in a recent public meeting, with a presentation by council Streetscape supremo Riccardo Marini. Cycling was hardly mentioned in his presentation - but was continually raised in questions, to the surprise of him and some other officials!

Greener Leith is keeping up pressure for a more cycle-friendly Leith Walk. They and we urge you to ask councillors and election candidates what they will do about this.

See also the following reports...

[pre-meeting] www.greenerleith.org/greener-leith-news/2012/3/14/still-wanted-a-vision-for-leith-walk.html

[pre-meeting] local.stv.tv/edinburgh/news/business/31159-edinburgh-tram-works-blamed-as-leith-walk-ranked-amongst-uk-worst-for-cycling

[post-meeting] www.greenerleith.org/greener-leith-news/2012/3/22/a-vision-for-leith-walk-what-people-said-online.html

SUSTRANS NCN ROUTE 76

The Sustrans national network from Musselburgh to Dunbar is currently being signed. Rides to celebrate its opening are planned, starting at the two ends and meeting in Haddington. Provisionally June 17. *More info:* nicolaATlyars.demon.co.uk

MARKET STREET – UPHILL CYCLE LANE

The council is still pondering what to do: reinstate the former car parking, install a taxi rank if taxis are banned from Waverley, or create an uphill cycle lane. Council cycle plans for 2012-13 include provisional cycle lane money, in case councillors do agree. *Please ask your councillors and candidates to promise they will!*

'SAFETY SUMMIT'

Following extensive publicity over recent cycling fatalities Green MSP and Spokes member **Alison Johnstone** asked the government to hold a 'Safety Summit.' Transport Minister **Keith Brown MSP** responded by devoting a meeting of the *Road Safety Operational Partnership Group** to this, with cycling organisations invited and with introductions by himself and Alison Johnstone.

*www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/road-safety/operational-partnership-group

A Spokes briefing paper suggested a 3-point urban-area plan:

- ◆ **Max 20mph in all residential and shopping areas** [20mph is increasingly common in residential areas, but rarely shopping].
- ◆ **Max 30mph on all main urban roads except clearways.**
- ◆ **Cycle facilities on 30mph urban roads, and on 20mph where appropriate.** While Edinburgh's highly visible coloured onroad lanes and ASLs programme has done and is doing much to grow cycle use, and needs continued, segregated routes, if well-designed, might be even more effective, and even safer. Public demand and European experience emphasise the need to trial and experiment with such physically segregated routes.

At the summit, Spokes pointed out that the government has bold targets to *boost cycle use* as well as to reduce casualties. The two should go hand-in-hand by making road conditions feel and be as safe and welcoming as possible through measures like those above.

For the Spokes briefing paper, reports of the meeting, and other material see spokes.org.uk : documents : submissions : national.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE THU 29 MARCH

Following the above, Green MSPs have secured a 75-minute parliamentary debate on cycling, to be led by Alison Johnstone.

If you read this in time, and you would like points raised in the debate, email your MSPs [www.writetothem.com] – ask them to let you know if they will attend the debate, and tell them the points you'd like them to raise. For example...

- ◆ **Government funding for cycling.** Our winter budget campaign was successful in greatly reducing the planned cuts. However, government cycling investment is still well under 1p in every £1 of transport spending [active travel in total, walking + cycling, gets just under 1p in every £1]. Cycling England research and European experience suggest £10 per head of population per year is needed to achieve significant ongoing increases in cycle use, towards the Scottish government's target of 10% of all trips by bike in 2020. That is £50m a year for cycling – just 2.5% of the £2bn transport budget. The government's own report *Low Carbon Scotland* [the 'RPP' document] suggests £1.32bn for cycling and walking over 11 years – average £120m per year – to make a sufficient contribution to carbon reduction targets.
- ◆ **Councils need to be urged to contribute too** - and Edinburgh has just set a great example [see Mar 3 news item at spokes.org.uk; also see *Spokes 112*]. The government should urge councils to invest in cycling a % of their transport budget at least equal to the percent of work trips already made by bike - as Edinburgh has done. Also, this % should be from their own transport budget, i.e. excluding the ring-fenced government funding they get such as CWSS and Sustrans money.
- ◆ **And your own thoughts and priorities for more and safer cycle use in town and country.**

Forth Bridge: No Bike Route

From Spokes member **Bruce Whitehead**, former Forthright Alliance chair...

The Forth replacement crossing scandal continues, but most environment campaigners have given up fighting. However there is a small window of opportunity. According to bridge engineers, dry air is now coming from the cables; i.e. dehumidification has worked. Ergo, the reason for the new bridge has disappeared.

The latest development comes as Transport Scotland confirmed the astounding news that the new bridge will have no footpath or cycleway. These were dropped to cut the cost, so in future cyclists and walkers will be unable to travel between Lothian and Fife during bad weather or when the old bridge is finally closed.

The bogus case for replacement is even more untenable in the face of huge cuts in public services to pay for the £1.7bn project. And no-one seriously believes that this will be the final bill. Now de-humidification is working, why won't the government cancel?

It claims it can't take the risk that drying might fail, so it must build new before the cables become too weak for HGVs, in 2019. In that case, how about Plan B: cable replacement for £122m? (2006 prices) The government says that would create too much disruption and cost the economy too much. And who wrote this analysis? - the British Chamber of Commerce, many of whose members will get massive contracts to build the new bridge.

But an earlier study by Alistair Andrew, previous chief engineer, says it can be done with minimal disruption and no total closures. Alistair's protege, Barry Colford re-wrote that report when he took over, to require a number of total closures. Meanwhile the escalating cost of the bridge threatens to sink other projects like hospitals, schools and sustainable transport schemes.

And all the while, silence from the very MSPs who should have been scrutinising the bogus case for bridge replacement. There is consensus among most parties for the flawed scheme, doubtless due to the near-total media support. No politician wants to go against the majority, even when a project is shown to be unsound.

There is, however, still a possible sticking point. Transport Scotland sources tell us it will seek a substantial advance payment of Scotland's block grant to pay contractors up front for the bridge. The UK Treasury has rejected this idea, but might David Cameron allow it in exchange for some compromise by Alex Salmond, such as on the wording of the independence referendum question?

To help contact brucek3ATaol.com 331 4799; 07944 928 702.