

*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).*

## FOR YOUR DIARY

### SEE ALSO EVENTS LIST ON SPOKES WEBSITE

**Apr 8 Spokes public meeting** 6.45 for 7.30, Augustine United Church, Geo IV Bridge [spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk). Preview in column 2 opposite.

**Apr 11 City Centre Transport** 7pm, City Chambers, High St, City Centre Neighbourhood Partnership mtg, open to all [free tea/coffee]. **Includes discussion of Princes St/Geo St** [see article]. [www.edinburghnp.org.uk/neighbourhood-partnerships/city-centre](http://www.edinburghnp.org.uk/neighbourhood-partnerships/city-centre)  
More info: [alan.dean@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:alan.dean@edinburgh.gov.uk) Tel: 529-7519

**Apr 19-20 Princes St/ George St Future Drop-in consultation events - IMPORTANT!!** See also article below.

**Apr 28 Innertube Postcode Challenge** Fun family day on North Edinburgh path network. Details will be at [www.elgt.org.uk](http://www.elgt.org.uk).

**May 7 Rail Business Plan for Scotland 2014-19** Nigel Wunsch, Network Rail Strategy & Planning Head [www.capitalrail.org.uk](http://www.capitalrail.org.uk) > events.

**May 13 6th Scottish Active Travel Conf** [walkcycleconnect.org](http://walkcycleconnect.org)

**May 15 Transport Investment Policy** Nicola Sturgeon MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment & Cities [i.e. boss of the Transport Minister]. 10am for 10.45. Jury's Inn, 43 Jeffrey St. [Ends 12.00, followed by SAPT members-only business mtg]. Send qns a.s.a.p. in advance to [sapt@btinternet.com](mailto:sapt@btinternet.com). [sapt.org.uk](http://sapt.org.uk)

**May 19 Pedal on Parliament** Vital! [pedalonparliament.org](http://pedalonparliament.org).

**June 15-23 National Bike Week** [www.bikeweek.org.uk](http://www.bikeweek.org.uk) and

**June 15-23 Edinburgh Festival of Cycling** [www.edfoc.org.uk](http://www.edfoc.org.uk)

**The NBW/EdFoC Week includes** [see also article on p2] ...

**June 15 St Andrews ride** [www.leprahealthinaction.org](http://www.leprahealthinaction.org)

**June 19 Spokes Bike Breakfast** City Chambers, 7.45-9.45

## PRINCES ST /GEORGE ST CONSULTATION [ends 9 May]

The Council consultation on Princes Street and George Street, called *Building a Vision for the City Centre*, has begun.

### THE COUNCIL PROPOSAL

The Council's overall vision, and its intent to act soon, are welcome, but to include a Princes St bike ban would be tragic.

As expected [Spokesworker 16.3.13] the Council plan **bans cycling eastbound in Princes St**, with westbound buses, taxis and bikes staying on the road as now. The north pavement would be widened right out to the tramlines. Eastbound cyclists would be diverted away from Princes St to a high-quality round-about route along George St, then back again at the far end of Princes St.

In **George St** the south roadway would be eastbound for all traffic [cars, buses, taxis, and bikes who wanted]. The north side would have a wider pavement and a 2-way segregated cyclist route. Car parking would remain in the middle of George St.

### THE COUNCIL CONSULTATION – AND YOU

*Please take part in as much of the following as possible...*

• **Online survey:** [www.surveymonkey.com/s/6G7MWW9](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/6G7MWW9) [see 'surveymonkey' below for some thoughts on the survey]

• **Your detailed comments:** email [citycentre.vision@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:citycentre.vision@edinburgh.gov.uk)

• **Drop-in sessions:** Assembly Rooms, George Street...

Fri 19 April, 12-6 and Sat 20 April, 10-2

• **Proposals document:** Search for 'download building a vision' at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk). It's a 1.27MB pdf file.

• **Consultation website:** For a web page with links to all the above, search for '1958 building a vision' at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk).

[continued overleaf]

## PUBLIC MEETING 8 April

It is easy in the cycle campaign world to think only of cycling, and forget its wider context as a part of overall transport policy. Our meeting aims to broaden perspectives, with top transport analyst **Professor Iain Docherty** describing trends and policies in local transport as a whole. The actual and potential role of cycling within that will then be discussed – by **Jim Eadie MSP** at Scottish level and locally by **Cllr Jim Orr**, Edinburgh Council cycling supremo. *Here are some examples of cycling/transport links...*

**A. Modal shift** – will higher bike use come from car, walk or bus, and can/should authorities try to influence this? There are big implications for public health, emissions, and local economies.

**B. Use of roadspace (for movement and for parking)** – how much should be for motor traffic, how much for designated cycling space and how much for people on foot? The car/bike balance lies behind much of the **Quality Bike Corridor** and the **Leith Walk** controversies. Cutting car space (moving or parked) is difficult politically, and councillors/MSPs need to be bold.

**C. Funding** - cycling investment comes mainly from transport budgets, but what is the balance? **Edinburgh** leads Scottish (UK?) councils, allocating 5% of its total transport budget to cycling (rising 1% a year; 6% in 2013/14). Even **London**, despite recent amazing cycling policy announcements [[spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk), 8.3.13 news] is only allocating 2% [its total transport budget is huge compared to Edinburgh's, so 2% is a lot of money]. The **Scottish Government** is bottom of the league: just 1% of its transport budget goes to cycling investment.

**D. Funding also gives messages to the public.** What is the real message if government asks people to transfer from car to bike, but then allocates £2000m to A9 upgrades, £1600m to a new Forth Bridge (with cycling banned), regularly announces major trunk road upgrades, and finds just £20m a year for cycling investment!

**E. Cycling and public transport** – there are many abject failures by relevant authorities to integrate cycling with rail/tram/bus...

• **The design of Edinburgh tramlines** as a 'standalone' project, then having to fit in cycling around a pre-determined layout, was a big mistake, leading to some of today's problems. This was pointed out by Spokes years ago as design began, when we brought over a Dutch expert in integrated tram/cycle planning.

• **Railway station and other big infrastructure designs** approved by the planning departments of Edinburgh and other Councils have often been a wasted opportunity, at worst a real failure. Initial plans for the huge new **Haymarket station** did not even include decent bike parking, let alone the Bike Hub which a big new city-centre station needs (for maintenance, bike hire etc). Astonishingly, and despite fierce objection, the A8 underpass to **Edinburgh Gateway** station and to the **International Gateway Business Centre** [[www.edinburghcentre.org/Edinburgh-Gateway.html](http://www.edinburghcentre.org/Edinburgh-Gateway.html)] from Gyle was given permission to be built for walking only.

• **Access between communities and stations by bike (and walk)** was dismissed by Transport Scotland in the Bathgate-Airdrie rail opening, saying this was for councils to fund, not the rail project. So much for Scottish Government integrated transport thinking! Only now, with stations open and problems obvious, has some funding at last been allocated, after the event, for a few of the problems such as Bathgate Station cycle access.

**F. Planning** - vital in relating cycling with other transport modes – not just for access, as above, but even more so to encourage local travel and to minimise out-of-town shopping and entertainment.

**In summary we hope this meeting will focus to a fair extent on how cycling relates to transport and planning as a whole, rather than on intricacies of cycle schemes.**

[ctd from p1]

## WHAT THE COUNCIL NOW SAYS

Once it became clear that the council proposed a cycling ban, we informed members by email and website, and many contacted councillors. **We believe this had a positive effect, so thank you if you wrote!** The council online 'surveymonkey' survey now has a specific question [Q10] asking you to suggest other cycling provision: we doubt this question was in the original. Transport Convener Cllr Lesley Hinds has also now said clearly that they will look carefully at alternatives suggested in the consultation.

## WHAT WE THINK

[See the March 15 news item at [spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk) for a lot more detail, e.g. on Jan Gehl's report & on tramline crashes]

Assuming the 1-way motor traffic plan happens, **2-way cycling should be provided in the very wide new north-side paved areas of both streets**, as in any cycle-friendly European city. On Princes St, removal of the big eastbound bus stops will make the paved area feel much more spacious even before further widening.

We suspect the Council has decided cycling needs one fairly fast east-west route, rather than permeable cycle access, and has decided on George St because it is away from the tramlines and is currently designated as part of the National Cycle Network.

**However, a Princes St cycle facility should anyway not be designed for fast travel.** The Dec 2011 Princes St traffic closure showed that cyclists adjust to the environment – very few speeded in that traffic-free situation, as our pictures show [e.g. Jan 28 news, [www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk)]. Also, careful design, perhaps 2-3cm below the pavement, and perhaps with similar high quality paving, should provide a solution acceptable to 'streetscape' visual demands.

**Second, the fact that George St is part of the NCN** is less important than where Edinburgh's everyday cyclists need to go.

**Third, tramline injuries will be reduced by a traffic-free environment**, not by banning eastbound Princes St cycling. In any case, many city centre cyclists come from or go to Lothian Rd or the Bridges, and have to cross tramlines whether using Princes St or going via George St (with the danger of additional junctions). Connecting George St to the Bridges safely is particularly difficult.

## SPOKES MEMBER SURVEY

Spokes members were surveyed on the future of Princes Street in our Spring mailing. At that time we didn't know what (if anything) the council would propose. **We did not for a moment imagine they would come up with a cycling ban, so we didn't include that option in our member survey.** However, our preliminary results [119 responses] are clear that Princes St is the top desired 2-way safe-cycling location, with preferences as follows...

**1st** [53 first preferences] Princes Street completely traffic-free and with a two-way cycle route. George St bus/car/taxi/bike.

**2nd** [40 first preferences] One-way motor traffic Princes & George St, with two-way cycling on the traffic-free sides of *both* streets [this of course differs greatly from the Council's Princes Street cycle ban].

**3rd** [17 first preferences] George Street completely traffic-free and with a two-way cycle route. Princes St bus/taxi/bike.

**4th** [7 first preferences] Keep bus/taxi on both sides of both roads, but reduced George St car parking and access.

**Full survey results will be posted on our website when complete.**

## THE COUNCIL'S SURVEYMONKEY SURVEY

See 'Consultation' above for link to the survey. Questions include..

**Q2 How should additional Princes St motor-free space be used** [space for you to write in your thoughts - good opportunity]

**Q4 Ditto for George St.**

**Q7 Your opinion on a dedicated cycle route** (+ve or -ve) but nowhere in this question to say where the route would be or that cycling should be enabled in both Princes St and George St.

**Q8 Will a George St cycle route make it safer to travel through the city centre?** Y/N [Tricky! No option to say safer for some journeys, and less safe for others – given all the left/right turns and tramline crossings to reach and leave the route from some directions]

**Q9 Will a George St cycle route make it easier to travel through the city centre?** Y/N [same comment as for Q8]

**Q10 Suggest any alternative cycling provision** – space for you to write in your answer. This is a good opportunity to say what you think should be done, and to comment on Q8 & Q9].

**Q11 Other comments?** It's worth reiterating important points.

## LEITH WALK

Council proposals for Leith Walk [Spokesworker 16.3.13] went to the Transport Cttee on March 19. Convener Cllr Lesley Hinds promised to consult community groups [unspecified which or how] before final Leith Walk plans are approved. **Constitution St** will happen soon and **Foot of the Walk to Pilrig St** later this year.

**Up from Pilrig** is in a state of flux: the Council is seeking extra cash from Sustrans and/or the Scottish Government. If successful there could possibly be a lengthy segregated route and London Rd roundabout replaced by a light-controlled junction. *You* can help make this more likely by writing to MSPs suggesting money from the recent UK budget [March 22 news at [spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk)].

Sadly, **20mph will only be considered for Leith Walk later.** This will come under the Council *Local Transport Strategy* [Spokes 115 p3] which will include speed policies for the entire city.

## FESTIVAL OF CYCLING

[www.edfoc.org.uk](http://www.edfoc.org.uk) 15 - 23 June 2013 all around Edinburgh

The first *Edinburgh Festival of Cycling* will include rides, workshops, talks, films, anything cycling. We need hardly mention the 19 June Spokes Bike Breakfast! See [www.edfoc.org.uk](http://www.edfoc.org.uk) for more.

**Individual and corporate sponsorship** packages are available to support the festival: publicity, t-shirts, event tickets, etc. Spokes gave an early donation to help EdFoC get off the ground.

EdFoC also needs **volunteers**: contact via [edfoc.org.uk](http://edfoc.org.uk). There'll be a volunteers meeting on Tuesday 16 April.

### Sat 22 June, 11-3 Heels on Wheels

A big EdFoC event, on the Meadows, including...

- Market stalls with women's cycling gear
- Stalls by **Spokes**, Sustrans and others
- Cake and coffee, Chocolate Tree ice-cream cargo bike
- Competitions: best dressed bike, most fashionable coordinated bike+rider, award for most unlikely female cycling outfit
- Cycling instructors – teaching novices to cycle

HoW is looking for other stallholders and for volunteer stewards. If you can help, see EdFoC : events or email [tracygriffenATgmail.com](mailto:tracygriffenATgmail.com).

## SMART CITY??

[www.heraldsotland.com/business/markets-economy/scotland-urged-to-join-smart-city-revolution.20546688](http://www.heraldsotland.com/business/markets-economy/scotland-urged-to-join-smart-city-revolution.20546688)

Mark Watts, energy and climate change director of international consultancy **Arup**, told Edinburgh Science Festival: "*Scotland has the aspiration to be a low-carbon country and Edinburgh and Glasgow to be low-carbon cities, so they should look around the world at places which have top rankings as green cities, such as Copenhagen, Stockholm, Portland and San Francisco.*" They should join the "smart city" revolution, using environmental and digital innovation to power economic growth.

Mr Watts urged projects such as district heating, self-powering buildings, *radical cycling investment* and digital information. Extensive cycling provision, which reduced spend on roads, was "*as much about economic resilience*" as about green policy.

Over 30 years Copenhagen had reduced transport spend from 14% to 8% of its GDP, and now hopes to increase the proportion of journeys to work by bike from its already high 35% to 50%. He added: "*They also say that for every kilometre somebody cycles, it saves them a dollar on health costs.*"

## FACTSHEETS ETC

**We have paper copies available of several Spokes factsheets...**

- Bike storage for tenement dwellers
- Cycling with children too young to have their own bike
- How to get your slightly older child cycling
- Shared paths - Considerate cycling

**Please contact us if you'd like any to distribute to relevant people, e.g. at school or other relevant events.** All our factsheets are also downloadable at [spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk) > documents > advice.

We've also spares of *Bulletin 115* and welcome volunteers to leaflet parked bikes in the city centre or local shopping areas.