

We have 3 main communications. Our flagship **Spokes Bulletin** 3 times a year – printed, and on our website under the Bulletin tab. Our electronic-only **Action-Update** goes to all emailable members “roughly monthly,” when there are enough important developments, with stop-press news of forthcoming events, and road, traffic and planning matters. **Spokesworker** is now a very occasional document, basically a souped-up Action-Update, but on paper as well as online. It is usually produced for occasions when paper is useful – for example at public meetings. Action-Updates and Spokesworkers both also appear on our website under the Spokesworker tab.

To keep in touch with events, developments and opportunities, be a Spokes member and make sure we have your email address.

CLIMATE & TRANSPORT

Nov 17: Spokes Public Meeting 6.45 for 7.30

Our autumn public meeting **Climate, Transport & Cycling**, with **Alison Johnstone MSP, Dave Gorman** and **Tom Ballantine**. Edinburgh University Appleton Tower, 11 Crichton Street, 7.30pm. Full details at spokes.org.uk [Sept 9 news].

Come early from 6.45 for...

- ◆ Chat & Spokes stall. Tea and coffee (free) available till 7.15
- ◆ On sale: lovely #WalkCycleVote T-Shirts. [see article]
- ◆ Talk to Ben Bate, our Presumed Liability rep [see article]
- ◆ A table to **join** or **renew** your Spokes membership [see article]
- ◆ Chat to (or join?) the intrepid #ed2paris cyclists [see article]

Before, during and/or after the meeting ...

- ◆ Tweet with the hashtag #Spokesmtg
- ◆ If you write a blog inspired by the meeting, send us the link
- ◆ Interesting World Bank blog: [Global Cyclists say NO to Carbon](http://blogs.worldbank.org/publicsphere/global-cyclists-say-no-carbon-opt-cdm) blogs.worldbank.org/publicsphere/global-cyclists-say-no-carbon-opt-cdm by [Prof Leszek J. Sibalski](http://www.worldbank.org), former UN and World Bank consultant.

Nov 28: Scotland's Climate March 12.00 for 12.30

People around the world are marching for a powerful agreement at December's International Climate Summit. The Scotland march starts 12.30 at The Meadows, ending in Princes Street Gardens for speeches, stalls, entertainment. *Details:* stopclimatechaos.org/march

- ◆ We hope to have a **Spokes banner** on the march – look for the banner and join us from 11.45 near Middle Meadow Walk.
- ◆ We hope to leaflet interested participants at the Meadows with the **Autumn Spokes Bulletin** [which has a Climate/Transport/Cycling supplement]. Please volunteer to help (from 11.45).
- ◆ We will have a **stall** in the Princes St Gardens marquee at the end of the march. Come and say hello or email us to help.

#ed2Paris

Six intrepid people (4M, 2F, 2 Spokes members) are cycling to Paris, to join over 1 million other world citizens lobbying world leaders at the Climate Summit, www.cop21.gouv.fr/en.

They will cycle around 60 miles a day, with a backup vehicle provided by friends, and part way will be joined by over 100 other people on bikes, leaving from London.

Even if you don't have time or energy to cycle all the way, they'd be delighted to have an escort out of Edinburgh - or on any part of the route. **Start 10am Nov 28 at The Bike Station, Causewayside, Edinburgh.** Go along before the 12.30 Climate march!!

Chat to rider Martyn Edelsten from 6.45 at our Nov 17 public meeting. Or email martyn.edelsten@ed.ac.uk, phone 0131 229 5830. More info at edinburgh2paris.org.

Stop Press: we don't know if or how the recent dreadful Paris attacks will affect the Climate Summit arrangements, or those intending to be there.

RENEW or JOIN SPOKES

At our Nov 17 public meeting there will be a special table at which you can join or renew Spokes membership. **Please join Spokes!!** We want to keep you in touch with what's happening and let you know when/why it's a good time to email councillors or MSPs.

If you haven't yet renewed this year you can do so on the spot. If you have a renewal form at home, bring it if possible.

All new and renewed memberships will count for 2016.

EAST-WEST ROUTE

Public consultation on the city centre east-west route, Roseburn to George Street to Leith Walk is expected to begin Monday 16th. A [Council report to the Oct 27 Transport Cttee](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk) explains the proposal.

We urge everyone interested to make a personal response – don't just leave it to Spokes and others. We'd like to see your thoughts too, for possible inclusion in the Spokes response.

There will undoubtedly be changes we'd like to see but it's vital to realise what a major step this is for the politicians: a segregated route to and through the city centre *taking significant roadspace from moving and parked traffic*. It's a whole new step in political courage by councillors, and should significantly boost bike use.

It is likely there will be major opposition to the scheme – maybe from taxi companies, maybe shop frontagers, maybe others. This is happening now in London in some of the 'Mini-Holland' proposals, with huge posters and public meetings called to oppose the plans. Cycle campaigners who initially were arguing for much more have had to turn instead to organised defence of the Council.

Hopefully things will not reach that stage in Edinburgh, but it emphasises how vital it is actively to support the proposals. Of course, it's important to point out where the plans should be improved, but please do this in a positive context, starting by complimenting the Council on coming forward with the plan.

Remember too that this is a *consultation*, not a final plan. It can be improved – but equally it risks being cut back in the face of opposition. Sections particularly at risk could be the segregated route at the east end of Princes Street [which we are delighted to see in the plans!] and the shopfront section at Haymarket Terrace.

MEADOWS-CANAL needs YOU

Edinburgh Council has received much praise over its recently opened Innocent-Southside-Meadows route, with main road light-controlled crossings and segregated onroad sections. It had been widely expected that the similar-design Meadows-Tollcross-Canal continuation would follow by 2016 – see original timescale below [NB the photos show the existing routes, not the proposed!!]

Meadows to Union Canal



- User group objectives workshop held in Feb-13.
- Route appraised & confirmed Apr-13.
- Design workshop complete 28 Feb 2014.
- Preferred design option to be developed by Summer 2014.
- Consultation late Summer 2014 followed by TRO's.
- Construction 2015/16.
- Note planned maintenance works 2014/15.



Now we hear that Council staffing priorities are likely to push this back to late 2017. However, it may still be possible to get the plans back on track for next year, 2016. **If this concerns you, contact your councillors – find them at www.writetothem.com.** Again, rather than slagging the Council, congratulate them on the first route and say why it's important to get this final section soon.

500,000 BIKE TRIPS!!

Following the Scottish Household Survey report that 11.8% of Edinburgh commuter trips are by bike [[Spokes Bulletin 123](#)] the Middle Meadow Walk Bike Counter on November 13 registered the 500,000th bike trip of 2015. And in our very wet November traffic count, car use fell almost as much as cycling! For more on this, see the [Nov 11 & 13 stories on our website](#).

THINGS TO DO!!

- ◆ Tell us if you find **bus lane conditions** worse on Saturdays/offpeak weekdays, now that cars and lorries are allowed in the lanes [[spokes.org.uk, June 3](#)]. If tweeting, use #buslanetrial.
- ◆ Remember to check our web page of **Planning Applications or PANs** which we think relevant to cycling [PANs are a public consultation stage for big developments, prior to a Planning Application] – there are several major ones just now. *Find the page at [spokes.org.uk : documents : local issues : current PAs](#)*
- ◆ What **Edinburgh Council services** matter to you? Give your views at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/budget](#). Twitter [#edinbudget](#).
- ◆ We have an active **twitter presence** @SpokesLothian. Please keep an eye on it and RT any tweets you support. Our latest tweets also appear on our website in the right-hand column.

#walkcyclevote

#walk
cycle
vote



Cycling and walking groups are getting together with shared basic priorities for the 2016 Holyrood election. Find out more and sign up at [walkcyclevote.scot](#). Tweet with #walkcyclevote.

- ◆ **Top priority:** Sustained, long-term investment in cycling and walking, reaching 10% of the transport budget. [Spokes note: Edinburgh's example is useful, 5%, + 1% a year until 10%]
- ◆ **also:** Build & maintain dedicated cycling infrastructure, enabling people aged 8-80 to cycle [or how about 1-100!]
- ◆ **and:** Promote & deliver safer roads for walking & cycling

#WalkCycleVote T-shirts on sale at our Nov 17 public meeting.

PRESUMED LIABILITY

From our [roadshare.co.uk](#) rep, Ben Bate. Email Ben your thoughts [[j.b.bate AT outlook.com](#)] or meet him before our Nov 17 public mtg.

The Road Share Campaign for Presumed Liability

The campaign aims to protect vulnerable road users, e.g. cyclists and pedestrians. The UK is out of step with Europe, being one of only five EU countries (along with Cyprus, Malta, Romania and Ireland) without some form of strict liability regime for vulnerable road users. Strict liability is already established in other areas of UK law, such as for employers and those in charge of dogs.

As a consequence, our current system expects those injured, or the families of those killed, to go through an often protracted and harsh process to gain treatment, care or compensation. In Europe, strict liability regimes are seen as an integral factor of cycle safety.

The Scottish Government has a policy to encourage walking and cycling so surely it should offer them this legal protection? - it has the power to introduce this principle into civil law. By introducing presumed liability, the Scottish Government has the opportunity to lead the UK in the welfare and status of cyclists and pedestrians.

Sign our petition to support Presumed Liability

To help change the culture on our roads and ensure that vulnerable road users are treated correctly in the event of a road traffic collision, please [sign the Road Share online petition](#) calling for a Bill to introduce Presumed Liability between motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. If you have already signed, thank you – and could you now ask a friend or relative to sign too? Please also share your views with your MSPs – they need to be convinced.

UTILITY CO. DANGERS

From Spokes Planning Group...

Road conditions that make cycling dangerous cause anxiety, are off-putting and give rise to accidents. Spokes encourages cyclists to report any dangerous road conditions such as potholes, sunken drains or loose or smooth manhole covers. Councils are ultimately responsible for ensuring safe road conditions but water, gas, electricity and telecommunications companies are each responsible for maintaining their own infrastructure including manhole covers.

Edinburgh City Council has been working for a number of years to push utility companies to adopt better maintenance standards but these efforts have so far not been sufficiently effective. Spokes is considering how we can best put pressure on utility companies to improve their standards and, in doing this, details of other cases of unacceptable responses will be very helpful.

One member has been in touch to highlight some very poor Scottish Water performance in responding to two reported clear dangers for cyclists - smooth manhole covers, which provide no grip in wet conditions, on downhill stretches where sharp turns are necessary. Although the need for replacement is not disputed, they have taken no action since the two problems were reported in writing five and nine months ago – and despite several reminders.

Spokes wants to hear if other members have evidence of similar appalling response standards by Scottish Water or any other utility company. If so please email details to [planning AT spokes.org.uk](#).

FAULT REPORTING

Co-incidentally, Spokes member Ross Hendry from West Lothian has emailed us about fault reporting. His comments were about West Lothian, but most are applicable in other Councils, so we have expanded them to include that.

As well as potholes and other road problems, Ross points out that anyone who cycles on the path network in West Lothian will be aware of the problem of broken glass, often regularly in the same locations, underpasses, secluded seated areas, etc.

In reporting a problem it is vital that the Council can locate it easily, without wasting time. One good method for urban street problems is to give the *number on the nearest lamp-post*. It should be 2 letters and 2 numbers in a square. Some reporting systems, such as FixMyStreet (below) let you use a marker pin on a map.

Unfortunately each Council has its own reporting method. **Simplest therefore is to use one of the generic reporting sites** which pass on reports of potholes, broken glass, faulty street lights, etc to the relevant section of the relevant council. For example, [www.fixmystreet.com](#), which also includes apps for reporting and which is operated by the Social Enterprise [www.mysociety.org](#). Ross reports that this has worked well for him.

If you prefer to use a Council website look there for a heading called *Report It*, then follow the links. If you can't see that, typing *pothole* in the search box nearly always gets you the right page.

Below we list council websites, also with numbers for phone reporting. And if you are reading this Spokesworker electronically, clicking the website name should get you to the reporting page.

Council [or other body]	Report by phone	Report online (may require registration)
Edinburgh	0800 232323	www.edinburgh.gov.uk
East Lothian	01875 824305	www.eastlothian.gov.uk
Midlothian	0131 663 1103	www.midlothian.gov.uk
West Lothian	01506 280000	www.westlothian.gov.uk
Fife	03451 550000	www.fife.gov.uk
Scottish Canals	0141 332 6936	www.scottishcanals.co.uk

LONG TERM SOLUTIONS

For a longer-lasting solution, add your support to...

- ◆ **Broken glass** – go to [haveyougotthebottle.org.uk](#)
- ◆ **Potholes** – search for *Fix It First* at [transformscotland.org.uk](#).