

SPOKESWORKER 4.3.16 updated 5.4.16

The Action-Update of Spokes the Lothian Cycle Campaign


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We have 3 main communications. Our flagship **Spokes Bulletin** is 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.

CORRECTION - Meeting at Orwell Terrace, not Place!

Spring Public Meeting • Monday 21 March 2016


www.spokes.org.uk


www.walkcyclevote.scot

Holyrood Hustings 2016

all welcome!

CON

GREEN

LAB

LIBDEM

SNP

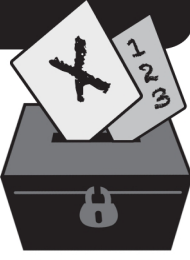
Cllr Nick Cook
(Edinburgh East & Lothians List)

Alison Johnstone MSP
(Edinburgh Central & Lothians List, Spokes member)

Sarah Boyack MSP
(Edinburgh Central & Lothians List, Spokes member)

Emma Farthing-Sykes
(Edinburgh Pentlands)

Jim Eadie MSP
(Edinburgh Southern)



Holyrood Election
Thursday 5 May

Question your candidates on cycling and transport policy

Twitter hashtags: #SpokesMtg and #Holyrood2016

STARTS 7.30pm DOORS OPEN 6.45pm

St Bride's Centre, 10 Orwell Place, Edinburgh EH11 2DZ

 Come early  coffee  Spokes stall  exhibition  chat

Organised by **Spokes The Lothian Cycle Campaign**
St Martin's Community Resource Centre, 232 Dalry Rd, Edinburgh EH11 2JG

spokes@spokes.org.uk (0131) 313 2114 (Ansaphone)
www.spokes.org.uk Twitter: @SpokesLothian

Update - 5 APRIL 2016

- ◆ A detailed report of the public meeting, including videos of the speakers, is at spokes.org.uk, [March 24 news item](#).
- ◆ There's now a great way to find your candidates, plus their contact details and replies to questions on cycling investment and other issues. See walkcyclevote.scot/candidate-info. Please do contact them – they want your vote! There are suggestions for what you could ask them in [our main election article](#), near the top of the page at spokes.org.uk.

FOR YOUR DIARY

- ◆ **Other Election Hustings** – there'll be many hustings in different parts of Edinburgh/Lothian. We'll list them [here on our website](#) and will also tweet from time to time.
- ◆ **April 23 PoP2016** – need we say more? pedalonparliament.org

PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT

Saturday 23rd April at 12 Noon
The Meadows, Edinburgh

Let's make Scotland a cycle-friendly country!



- ◆ **May 5th – Holyrood election** – are you registered to vote? For this and loads more info see our spokes.org.uk [election article](#).
- ◆ **June 9-16 Edinburgh Festival of Cycling** including by Spokes.. **Bike Breakfast** (Weds 15th), **Cycling and Health public meeting** (Mon 13th), **Farmers' Market stall** (Sat 11th), and **Guided Cycle Facility Tours**. More details of all these events later.

Two national topics we hope will receive plenty attention are...

CYCLING INVESTMENT

Along with many other organisations and the WalkCycleVote.scot campaign, our top 'ask' is ...

... that the Scottish Parliament raises the proportion of its transport budget allocated to cycling and walking from the present 1.9% to 10% by the end of the next Parliament.

#walk
cycle
vote



Whilst Councils are different to governments, Edinburgh Council is nonetheless a great example. Edinburgh allocated 5% to cycling at the last council elections, increasing by 1% a year, and will reach 10% by the end of the council's life, May 2017.

What is more, Edinburgh is the only Scottish Council which in the census achieved a reduced % of car use and higher bus, cycling and walk. Whereas the government has seen Scotland-wide car use rising, bus falling, and only a small cycling increase. Perhaps no surprise, given rising trunk road spending, and cycle investment at just 1.9% of total transport (though up from 0.9% two years ago).

Even our very modest proposal to reallocate a mere 1% of the government's £820m trunk road spending to active travel in the Scottish Government's 16/17 budget, to counteract funding problems such as the 26% cut in the Cycling Walking and Safer Streets budget, was rejected [spokes.org.uk [5.1.16](#) & [24.2.16](#)].

CUTS IN RAIL BIKE CAPACITY

Despite the oft-stated government 'vision' to raise cycling to 10% of all trips by 2020 (currently 1%-2%) their transport agency, Transport Scotland, has approved plans which will worsen bike capacity on new and refurbished trains for the West Highland lines (Oban, Mallaig etc) and the Edinburgh-Glasgow main line.

We discovered this recently, so it is not in Spokes Bulletin 124, but there is a full article on our website, with extracts overleaf.

Please ask election candidates (at our hustings and elsewhere) not just what they would like to do if elected, but **what they will do right now!** Our understanding is that there is still just time for changes to the interior plans of the refurbished class 158 trains for the West Highland (and Far North) lines, or of the new class 385's coming to Edinburgh-Glasgow, Edinburgh-Dunblane, etc.

MORE THINGS TO DO!

- ◆ Tell us if you find bus lane conditions worse on Saturdays or offpeak weekdays, now that the bus lane cuts are being trialled [spokes.org.uk, [June 3](#)]. If tweeting, use #buslanetriall.
- ◆ **Remember to check our web page of Planning Applications or PANs relevant to cycling** [PANs are a public consultation stage for big developments, prior to a Planning Application]. **Find it at** spokes.org.uk : documents : local issues : current PAs
- ◆ 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.
- ◆ We have plenty copies of new **Spokes Bulletin #124**. Please tell us if you could take a supply (how many?) to leaflet bikes at your work, shopping areas, etc. Either one-off for this bulletin or regularly (3 times a year).

RAIL/BIKE SPACE CUTS

... what is planned and what *you* can do

On the **West Highland Line, Glasgow to Fort William, Oban & Mallaig** 6 bikes can be booked at present - bookings which are often fully occupied, especially in the tourist season, with further potential visitors disappointed. Yet the replacement trains will be refurbished Class 158 trains *with only 2 reservable bike spaces* (plus 2 non-reservable spaces in one wheelchair space if that space is free). Thus even a small family of 2 adults and one child could not book space, let alone a group of friends.

Transport Scotland did not even consult on this change – but had they done so we would have argued that, since these trains will also be used on the Far North Lines, Inverness to Kyle and Wick/ Thurso, where current on-train bike capacity is very poor, six bookable spaces could have boosted cycle tourism there too.

Cycle tourism is important to the **West Highlands and Islands economy** and this cut will impact many small local businesses. A [2013 report by Transform Scotland](#) found annual leisure and holiday cyclist expenditure in Scotland to be at least £106m, possibly up to £228m, and higher if mountain biking is included.

On the **Edinburgh-Falkirk-Glasgow main line** the current Class 170 trains have 2 bike areas, each with 2 official bike spaces. *Despite train length being increased from 3-coach to 4-coach, with many more seats*, the new Class 385 electric trains will have only one bike area (with 2 official spaces) plus an awkwardly shaped 'flexible space' outside the universal access toilet.

The one **official cycle storage area** will have fold-up seats (unlike current trains) irritating seated passengers if a bike gets on later. (NB: in both the old and new trains the official bike areas can squeeze in one or two extra bikes, at the guard's discretion).

The one **'flexible space'** in the new trains is the circulation space outside the universal access toilet – on one side it is too short for a normal adult bike and on the other side it makes access to the toilet less convenient. During the consultation [Spokes had argued for a well-designed flexible space in every carriage](#), to hold pushchairs, bikes, bulky luggage, etc. Instead, inflexibility looks set to be built-in, with users of bikes, push-chairs etc having to scurry along the platform to find the limited spaces.

Transport Scotland retreats further

As well as approving these tragic cuts in bike capacity, Transport Scotland has also announced that **it will no longer attend the national rail/cycle forum** which meets quarterly, with rail and cycling representatives, to discuss bike/rail issues in Scotland.

Since Transport Scotland is the body which implements the government's transport policy, this astonishing decision casts further doubt on how serious the government is in its 'vision' for 10% of all journeys to be by bike in 2020 – a vision [now termed a 'commitment'](#) in the *Infrastructure Investment Plan* accompanying the recent Scottish budget - but virtually impossible now to meet.

Facilities at stations – an alternative??

Abellio/ScotRail wishes to encourage travel to and from stations by bike and is introducing bike hire at a limited number, as well as improving bike parking – plans which we very much support.

However, on-train bike space remains crucial. Many people (holidaymakers as just one example) need to take their own bike(s) – and, in any case, Scotland has around 350 stations, with bike hire only likely at 15-20 of these in the next few years.

What *you* can do

It's not too late for Transport Scotland to re-think these disastrous decisions on two of Scotland's most important routes for bike/rail travel. The Edinburgh-Glasgow Class 385 electric trains and the West Highland Class 158 diesels are not yet at the stage of internal fitting out.

If you are concerned, please help...

- ♦ [Email your MSPs](#) Since the decisions are primarily Transport Scotland's responsibility, urge your MSPs to ask the *Transport Minister* for a rethink. And say why bike/rail matters to you.
- ♦ [Raise this with election candidates](#) and at [hustings](#). Ask what candidates will do *now*, given that work will soon be underway.
- ♦ **If you have contacts in the tourism industry, or local businesses** that will be affected, especially in the West Highlands, tell them what is happening.
- ♦ **Retweet relevant Spokes tweets** including our tweets about ... [our hustings](#) ... [the Holyrood election](#) ... [Bike/rail cuts](#). These tweets can also be found high up in [our twitter 'likes'](#).

Further information

- ♦ See our [press release](#) and/or contact our **Bike Rail liaison officer**, Ewan Jeffrey. Email: [bikeraill\[at\]spokes.org.uk](mailto:bikeraill[at]spokes.org.uk)
- ♦ For **wider bike/rail issues** see our [web page](#)
- ♦ Our letter to **Derek Mackay MSP**, Minister for Transport and Islands Minister is [here](#). Note that since it was written it has been clarified that on the Edinburgh-Glasgow trains, in addition to the official bike space, 2 bikes will also be allowed in the 'flexible space' near the universal access toilet – however this is far from ideal, as described above. What with also the fold-down seats in the official bike space, overall provision is inferior to now – despite the trains having one more carriage.

RENEW or JOIN SPOKES

At our 21 March public meeting/hustings there will be a table to join or renew Spokes membership. We want to keep you in touch with what's happening and also to let you know when/why it's a good time to email councillors or MSPs. **Join Spokes here!!!**

If you're a member and haven't yet renewed this year you can do so on the spot [if possible bring your renewal form].

NETHERLANDS TOUR

Spokes member Iain Longstaff is organising a Netherlands cycling study tour in September, led by British exile and cycle planning expert David Hembrow. Iain hopes to attract a few people involved in cycle planning decisions, such as councillors and professionals, plus some ordinary Spokes members. He says...

It would be a great opportunity to see a place with some of the highest levels of cycling in the world and how that affects what we should be campaigning for in Scotland. The tour would visit Assen and Groningen, and will include the Assen school run. Details of the tours are at www.hembrow.eu/studytour.

The tour itself (i.e. excluding accommodation and travel to/from UK) is provisionally Sep13-15, costing £180-£315 each depending on numbers, which can be up to 12 people. Accommodation costs depend on where you stay, probably from £25-45 per night.

If you or anyone you know are interested in joining this tour, email: i.longstaff.1@AT.research.gla.ac.uk.

LOTHIANS MAP OUTLETS

We're trying to keep track of out-of-Edinburgh outlets which sell the local Spokes cycle/walk maps. It's not easy, as maps are distributed in more than one way. Below are shops that we *think* currently stock the map for their area (and maybe more).

Please help as follows...

- ♦ contact Spokes if you know of any mistakes in the lists
- ♦ publicise to friends etc that these shops sell our cycle map!
- ♦ contact us if you'd like to become a local 'agent' to approach book, bike or other shops in your town about selling the map

East Lothian

Ace Bike Co. Nth High St, Musselburgh	Belhaven Bikes, Dunbar
Kesley's Bookshop, Haddington	Mike's Bikes, Haddington
Nicholson's Newsagent, Longniddry	Law Cycles, North Berwick

Midlothian

Halfords, Straiton Retail Park
Criterium Cycles, Dobbies Garden World
Butterfly & Insect World, Dobbies Garden World
Eskbank Trading, 2 Station Road, Eskbank
The Bike Repair Shed, 13 Station Road, Newtongrange
Short's Self Drive, 39 Bonnyrigg Road, Eskbank
Chapel Cross Guest House & Tearoom, 2 Penicuik Road, Roslin
Lowland Motorhome Hire, Yard 3B, Newbattle Road, Newtongrange

West Lothian

Scot Cycles, Crofthead, Livingston	Herbie's Bikes, Pumpherston
Pedal Power, West Calder	