

SPOKES £1m COMPETITION 2009 – THE RESULTS

For our annual summer competition this year, Spokes asked how to invest £1m to get more people cycling more often, for ordinary journeys in Scotland, now and into the future. We had a great set of entries, showing the range of ideas just waiting to be unleashed if the money was there! The complete set of entries will be put on the Spokes website, and overleaf is a summary of the prizewinning entries.

Spokes' challenge to the Government and Councils is for them to demonstrate the will to deliver on their own stated targets! - in the government's case their so-far unfunded target of 10% of journeys in Scotland to be by bike by 2020. In last and this year's budget we've asked the Scottish Government to start taking this seriously by doubling cycling investment through a new £20m cycle projects fund. The government hasn't yet agreed to do this, or even to look properly at the current decline in funding for cycling shown by our analysis [see Spokes website], but the results from this year's competition are being used in our budget submission in the hope they will help inspire a greater understanding of what could be achieved.

Many thanks to everyone who took part - and of course, please feel free to send in any other ideas you think might help crack the problems Scotland faces if it is to increase everyday cycling towards the levels seen in many other European countries. Whilst of course there are challenges to be overcome, where there is a will there is a way!! **You can also help by lobbying your MSPs to take our proposal seriously in the budget negotiations between October and January** – see 23 October news item on Spokes website.

Our competition drew a wide range of responses, with three major themes emerging: (1) **infrastructure** to improve safety, perceptions of safety and the visibility of cycling as a means of transport; (2) **working directly with people**, around leadership, demonstration, training and promotion; and (3) **integration with other transport options** - buses, trains, park and ride etc. Everyone who entered had a central concern of breaking down existing

disincentives to cycling around actual / perceived dangers, with many also looking to promote the positives. Some specific problems were identified - missing links in paths, ignorance of officials or others of cycling issues and needs, inadequate staffing for training, storage issues and constraints to linking cycling with other forms of transport. In particular, there were repeated calls for a continuous network of safe cycling routes – i.e. cohesive, fully-connected, clearly designated. Some entries focused on improving training and awareness-raising in cycling matters by transport planning and policy officials. As with infrastructure proposals, the view was that the message must be sent out that cyclists have a legitimate place on the roads and that they are officially welcomed rather than just grudgingly tolerated.

The judging panel (including Tom Rye, Professor of Transport at Napier University) considered each entry according to how effectively it might get more people on bikes more often, and in relation to the entrant's description of the proposal itself. The top three winners cover neatly the vital need to invest in infrastructure to improve safety and promote cycling in a highly visible way, the 'people' factors of promotion, demonstration and leadership, and integrating cycling more into other forms of transport.

Unsurprisingly, some entries were Edinburgh-based, with a much more ambitious take on the possibilities enhanced funding might bring than seen in current council policy. Special mention should be made of the very strong calls for a real focus on safe, high-profile cycle routes across the heart of the city to allow cyclists of all ages and abilities to cross the city without the current obstacles or hindrances – particularly a cycling route up Leith Walk, along Princes St, up Lothian Rd with safe connections to the Meadows and the Canal. These entries of course highlight the missed opportunities for more sustainable transport planning in the context of the tram works, but if Edinburgh is indeed to meet its cycling targets, the Council can't afford to ignore these critical route issues.

PRIZES.- Top prizewinner had first choice of prizes, and so on till all were claimed

ScotRail	www.scotrail.co.uk	1st class return for 2 between any 2 ScotRail stations
Lothian Buses	lothianbuses.com	Ridacard for 4 week's travel
TIE	www.tie.ltd.uk	Expert guided tour of the Edinburgh tram works
EDINBURGH BICYCLE COOPERATIVE 	www.edinburghbicycle.com	Revolution Workstand [£88 value]
Laidback Bike Tours	www.laid-back-bikes.co.uk	free guided recumbent-bike ride for 2 people
The Bike Station	www.thebikestation.org.uk	£50 Bike Station voucher, eg. for a renovated bike, new parts, workshop fee, training, or a combination. Voucher donated by Spokes.
Annpurna Indian Vegetarian	44 St Patrick Square	0131 662 1807 Lunch or evening meal for 2
Engine Shed cafe	www.theengineshed.org	Saturday vegetarian breakfast for 2
Sustrans	www.sustrans.org.uk	Complete set of all Sustrans Scotland maps

SUMMARY OF PRIZEWINNING ENTRIES

Prizewinner	Summary of entry
Euan Renton (joint first)	A fund of £1 million would be made available to small employers in Scotland (e.g. organisations with less than 100 employees), to enable them to provide facilities (secure parking, lockers changing facilities and showers) and promote cycling to employees to achieve a growth in cycle commuting.
Nick Brotchie (joint first)	Create or extend existing red cycle lanes, plus advanced stop lines at junctions, on every A and B road in Edinburgh, to create a continuous network of cycle routes on every street throughout the city. They should also be created within existing greenways and on roundabouts. The lanes should be demarcated by rumble strips to discourage vehicle encroachment. Parking in cycle lanes should be banned and properly enforced. In conjunction with this, the speed limit on all other roads in the city should be reduced to 20mph.
Mike Lewis (third)	A 'Rack'n'Roll' scheme: equip around 200 Scottish bus routes with American style bike racks, so each bus can carry two bikes safely and securely. This would provide back-up for commuters, encourage leisure cycling, and contribute a highly visible reminder of the existence of bikes in the wider transport system. Routes to be selected would probably lead from cities and large towns into surrounding commuter towns and the countryside, e.g., Edinburgh to Melrose.
Pippa Coutts (fourth)	Make cycling more possible and popular for children – for school, with parents, at weekends. Promote with pregnant women or post-natally; promote cycling to and at school; bike to school scheme – e.g., subsidising bikes for children in schools. Giving cyclists who are parents time off to support schools in developing cycling activities. Promotion for older children (S3+) with community development workers helping with designing, funding and implementing local (infrastructural) projects that support cycling.
James Ryder (fifth)	A South-Edinburgh-to-Bush link, involving a new cycle path across farmland, pavement re-classified as cycle path, traffic calming measures, to link with existing Edinburgh University cycle path and enhance connections. Enlargement of the bypass tunnel. This should encourage more inexperienced cyclists; leisure cyclists would also benefit. Organisations on the Bush estate would be asked to help promote the new route.
Tom Morris (sixth)	Lockable bike racks and bike workshops (manned for safety, also creating employment) with cycle hire at each main railway station (e.g., Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen, Leuchars), as in the Netherlands.
David Wardrop-White (seventh)	Bike parking facilities in cities - invite cities in Scotland to identify the next tranche of street locations for bike parking and to bid for a share of the £1M to fund their installation. The visible provision of cycling facilities would encourage more people to cycle, as is happening in Edinburgh already.
Katharine Wake (eighth)	Introduce cycling as an element of the driving test, possibly through an on-road cycling element, supervised by a qualified instructor, with questions relating to safety etc, or as a simulation. Would raise awareness of cycling, provide some training to encourage more, and help normalize cycling.
Gary Bell (ninth)	Establish a not-for-profit social enterprise cycling training network across Scotland employing and assessing qualified Bikeability cycle trainers (national standards). Children and adults in Scotland would be offered the three levels of Bikeability training, building on the Scottish Cycle Training Scheme but with higher levels of investment and marketing to promote cycling as a safe everyday mode of transport.
Charles Wallis (tenth)	Three Bridges Roseburn Cycle Path to Union Canal Link (following the route of the old Caledonian railway line), to provide a strategic link between the cycle networks of north Edinburgh to the Union Canal and South Edinburgh, completing a missing link. Cyclists and pedestrians could then make an easy, seamless journey across busy rail, tram and road routes linking Route One from Roseburn to Route 75 at the canal. Signage from the integrated Haymarket Station and Tram stops, and cycle storage facilities here to encourage cycle/train/tram combinations.