

Spokes Autumn Public Meeting : Cycling Investment

Barclay Bruntsfield Church 19 Nov. 2013

Chair **Alison Johnstone MSP**, Spokes member, Co-Convener of Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Cycling Group

Speakers *How funding is and could be used...*
John Lauder, Chief Exec of Sustrans Scotland
Sara Dorman, co-coordinator of Pedal on Parliament (PoP)
The campaign for increased funding in the 14/15 budget and beyond...
Tom Ballantine, Chair of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS)

Audience Approx 100 people

1 John Lauder, Chief Exec of Sustrans Scotland

Aims of talk - to summarise the work of Sustrans with lots of other organisations; and to ask what could happen if funding reached European-style levels.

Funding mostly from Sustainable Transport Team in Transport Scotland (TS).
Infrastructure gets about 90% of Sustrans funds, soft measures the rest.

A Current Sustrans investment

- **Community Links (CL)** is their biggest scheme
 - worth £7m in 2013-14; match funded 50-50, hence a total of about £14m.
 - Sustrans want Local Authorities (LAs) to re-assess their schemes to give best value for money.
 - Partners for CL: the 32 LAs; Scottish Canals; Forestry Commission Scotland; National Parks; Helix; Regional Tpt Partnerships; Network Rail.
 - Currently there are 105 projects. £30m spent since 2008.
- **National Cycle Network**: value £1m in 2013-14; has spent £20m since 2008; partners as above, plus TS Standards Branch.
- **Maintenance etc**: (of NCN);
- **Connect2** – value £4m;
- **Street Design** – aim to redesign streets on basis of Designing Streets Guidance. Value £200K.
- **Embedded Officers**: working within LAs or other partners, eg Fife, Edinburgh ATAP, SPT.
- **Soft Measures**:
 - I-Bike; partners Edinburgh, Fife, D&G, Perth/Kinross;
 - Hands-up Scotland (measures cycling to school rates annually);
 - Support for school travel professionals such as Active Travel (AT) Co-ordinators;
 - E-bikes in Cairngorms;
 - Make-your-move Kirkcaldy;
 - Promotion material – maps, NCN, tourism orgs;
 - Signage, including giving training in this to partner orgs;
 - AT Champions, eg in work places, Health Boards;
 - Monitoring levels of use (eg NCN) and travel behaviour surveys;
 - Volunteer network, for NCN and other routes.

B What *could* happen with proper funding:

- Who might fund? Probably TS. Present problem is no definite annual budget for cycling- 'indulgent uncle' syndrome. LAs provide some funding via CWSS and their own resources;
- How distributed? Via TS and the LAs; nothing so far from Health, despite the big benefits; wants Health and Tpt Ministers to get together.
- Who will lead? LAs mainly, but they are losing staff and their skills (eg for land negotiations). Only 4 LAs have dedicated Cycling Officer. TS however has staff of about 350, of whom 2½ look after AT; so TS needs to do more leading with more staff. NHS could also lead.
- **Shortage of skilled staff and maintenance of what is put in are both big issues.**
- Behaviour change: Cycle-friendly councillors play important role; and cycling is becoming a vote-winner.

2 Sara Dorman, co-coordinator, Pedal on Parliament (PoP)

Sara is also a member of the Edinburgh Transport Forum.

Photo of Strathern Rd shows parking bays on top of the cycle lane!

Message: paint is not good enough! European levels of investment are much higher.

Infrastructure more needed than soft measures like Niceway Code – we need to change the landscape before addressing 'personal choices'. Compare London's '*Space for Cycling*' campaign with Scotland's (rather pathetic) 'Give me Cycle Space'.

Cycling should be *integrated*, not an add-on. Design guidelines need revised **and upgraded in line with international standards**; infrastructure should not create conflicts with peds or heavy traffic. Good infrastructure gives real choice.

Shared use is OK but not if it takes space from peds; not ad hoc; well signed, **clear to everybody** and well designed.

Roundabouts: a Dutch-style one is being trialled in London.

Why are we in this mess?

- **Europe has generally higher car ownership rates but they are discouraged from using cars for short journeys.**
- Policies *prioritise cars*, even though in Edinburgh 42% have no access to a car. In US, mayors compete to attract business by offering good cycle routes. Amsterdam had similar car domination and congestion but took on new policies.
- “There's *no room* for cycle facilities” (possible objection) – slide shows football field superimposed on Picardy Place, and Tollcross, to show there IS room.
- **‘Cycling is for losers?’: No**, in US, protected cycle lanes have proved good for business.
- **“Too expensive”** - but cheaper options can act as pilots for longer-term measures (**e.g. armadillos, divider posts, many more designs are on the market. The problem is usually that it is expensive if added as an afterthought, NOT if built in from the start.**
- **‘Bad for shopping?’** No, there is robust data to show that it increases footfall.
- **‘Too dangerous with HGVs?’** There are options to get rid of these in the same space and change dangerous designs.

Seville – cycle use rose from 0.5% to 7% in 7 years, with political will.

It is expensive NOT to do this properly: NHS could save £1bn a year by promoting cycling. **That is why we campaign for the 8-point POP Manifesto.**

3 Tom Ballantine, leader of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS)

Background

- SCCS has potentially 1.6 million supporters, via the unions, students, faith and environment orgs affiliated to SCCS. The thinking is that united these groups are more powerful, hence SCCS.
- Transport is responsible for 25% of CO2 emissions; of which roads cause 75%. And emissions are at an all-high. Therefore KEY to any sustainability policies.
- Scottish target is to decarbonise by 2050 and to make 'significant progress' towards this target by 2030.
- Need to shift away from cars (even when designing new models around biofuel/electric etc.
- Need for behaviour change, targeting individuals, groups and infrastructure at all stages (park the bike, ride it for all types of journeys).

Travelling Tales

- On our website, new blogging site with travelling tales (people who have changed their mode of transport and tell about what it was like to do so, to inspire others).

Campaign for increased active travel funding for 2014/15 and beyond

- Campaign to 'see double' (the money that is asked for, the targets, etc.) year on year until it is 10% of the transport budget (just as we will have 10% of all people cycling)
- It is our job to make them see that it is possible and there is no problem in making decisions in favour of cycling.
- Keep writing to MSPs, to John Swinney etc., keep the pressure up.
- A mass tweeting to be organised in January. Join our twitter campaign #wanttoseedouble

4 Dave du Feu, Spokes

- Summarised current issues where concerned individuals could act, as listed in latest Spokesworker.. www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/spokesworker/
- Spokes has around 1000 members but 2000 twitter followers! So, urged non-members to join today so as to keep in touch with developments and how they can influence change.

5 Questions and Discussion

The speakers as a panel discussed queries and points from the audience.

There was much discussion about different ways of campaigning and how effective they are, with suggestions for new ways of doing so/ different things to focus on, including:

- Sending personal interest stories to the press with positive stories about cycling
- Deliberately targeting a wider range of people with our publicity /efforts (not talk just to people who already know)
- Campaign for joining up public transport with cycle-friendly routes (e.g. for tourists, and local users) – At the moment: where can you go from Haymarket and Waverley? – appalling junctions at both stations, yet these are important starting points for many potential cyclists.

We need concentrated efforts to join things up: no good to have lots of little projects that do not lead anywhere. Look at where cyclists want to travel, and spend money on improving those routes first (through-flows, like traffic flow monitoring – perhaps more data need to be gathered to determine where these flows are).

Spend effort on measures that discourage people from driving short journeys (short journeys are the

most frequent, in Europe cars do not drive short journeys)

Press for ensuring that current agreed policies and measures are carried through – this is often due to staff shortages and lack of communications between different parts of government

How could the NHS pick some of these issues/be made to engage with these huge issues? – GPs are not well placed to do this. Much of the conversation amongst health workers is instead about diet. How can we influence them to take active travel into account more?

Representation at Community Councils is important – how can Spokes ensure that we cover more (all?) community councils with cyclist representation?

Edinburgh needs to develop its access to the waterfront – such a nice asset, yet there are few routes to get there.

Always take a positive approach in campaigning – negativity is never a good idea/ is not productive.

Think of things to do with councillors (rather than just putting pressure on them to do things for you), e.g. invite them to events, take them for a cycle ride, etc. Creative ways of involving them in bike-related events and getting publicity for it, that help them make these points to their colleagues.

Remember that the main problem for sympathetic councillors is party politics and persuading their own colleagues. Think about how we can give politicians the confidence to take these campaigns on.

What kind of evidence can we use and how can we present it to them to help their confidence? More data to collect? Different ways and times to present it to them?

Repeatedly there have been big projects that fail to integrate designs for incorporating cycling, and there are often implementation problems.

How can we get local authorities to spend the money on cycling? Pedal on Local Authorities?

The Chair thanked all speakers; and the 100-strong audience for turning out on a cold wet night.

Peter Hawkins, 20 Nov. 2013.
Mies Knottenbelt Nov 26 2013