

**TACKLING CYCLE STORAGE FOR
TENEMENTS AND FLATS IN EDINBURGH**



December 2010

SPOKES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 TPI was commissioned by SPOKES to look into the most effective ways of providing cycle storage in residential tenement and flatted premises in Edinburgh. The ultimate purpose is to promote cycling in the city by increasing the number of people cycling on a day to day basis.
- 1.2 This helps meet the City of Edinburgh Council's pledge when it signed up to the Brussels Charter and committed to a target of 15% of trips to be made by bicycle by 2020. The current level of cycling commuting in Edinburgh is about 6%¹. In order to achieve the 15% figure it is important that the City of Edinburgh Council and cycling groups make cycling as convenient and safe as possible.
- 1.3 A number of local authority policies are in place to promote and ensure that cycling becomes an increasingly viable form of transport. The following is a list of relevant policies that were incorporated into the **Local Transport Strategy 2007 – 2011**.
- The Council will install or seek installation of secure bicycle parking;
 - The Council will increase the number of pedal cycle parking spaces available at locations with significant actual or potential demand for cycling; and
 - The Council will take active measures to encourage cycling through marketing and training.
 - The Council supports the carriage of bicycles on rail services and medium to long bus journeys;
- 1.4 The city council has recently published its **Active Travel Action Plan** for walking and cycling. It aims for 15% of all journeys to work and 10% of all journeys generally to be by bike by 2020. The latter figure is also in line with the Scottish Government's 10% target set out in its **Cycling Action Plan**.
- 1.5 The Active Travel Action Plan says that 60% of Edinburgh residents live in tenements and flats and it acknowledges that a "lack of cycle parking at home and elsewhere" is a significant barrier to achieving its targets.
- 1.6 Actions in the Plan include the following:
- To produce/disseminate guidance on cycle parking for tenements/flats;
 - Pilot on-street residential bike parking;
 - Funding permitted, pilot improved bike parking for existing social housing;
 - Continue to apply bike parking standards to new developments [including new residences].
 - Monitor and enforce their detailed implementation.

SPOKES

- 1.7 SPOKES is a very effective cycle campaign group which has been promoting cycling in the Edinburgh and Lothian region since its formation in 1977. It is a voluntary organisation with a membership of over 1000 people. Alongside cycling, SPOKES also promotes other sustainable travel modes.
- 1.8 As well as undertaking lobbying activities at a local and national level, SPOKES produces and maintains a comprehensive cycling map of the area. The organisation also produces regular newsletters, accompanying these with press releases and briefings. SPOKES has

¹ 'SHS Transport: Local Area Analysis 2007/08' Table 1, Scottish Government, October 2009.

an effective web presence, including *SPOKES Worker* bulletins, forums, Facebook and Twitter sites. It holds cycle forum meetings which include guest speakers and which promote active debate of key issues.

- 1.9 SPOKES is seen as a challenging but constructive organisation and is one of the most highly regarded and effective cycling lobby groups in the United Kingdom. Its objectives are:
- To promote cycling, as part of a sustainable transport and access strategy, and to ensure that councils and government actively do the same;
 - To publicise the benefits of cycling for the community and individuals.
- 1.10 The organisation, in partnership with the City of Edinburgh Council, has identified that inadequate cycle storage in Edinburgh tenements and flats is a significant barrier to the uptake of cycling by residents.

Structure of the Report

- 1.11 Following this introductory chapter, the report comprises the remaining chapters:
- 2.0 Scope of the study
 - 3.0 Research Elements
 - 4.0 Guidance and Standards
 - 5.0 Agency Involvement
 - 6.0 Conclusions

2.0 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

2.1 SPOKES issued a brief for a three stage process to tackle the issues of cycle storage in flats and tenements:

- **Stage 1:** Research based identification of practical cycle storage solutions including the:
 - Identification of a range of solutions appropriate for existing tenements/flats;
 - Identification of a range of solutions appropriate for consideration when planning new flat developments;
 - Drafting of detailed guidance on bike storage for tenements/flats for wide dissemination to residents etc;
 - Drafting of detailed guidance on bike storage considerations for new developments for wide dissemination to planners, developers etc.
- **Stage 2:** Dissemination of information on storage options.
 - Dissemination of practical information about storage options / advice to residents / residents' organisations etc in Edinburgh.
 - Communication around the project to other local authorities and relevant bodies throughout Scotland, to create awareness (and use) of the online information.
- **Stage 3:** Planning for implementation.
 - Analysis of how to actually achieve the wide implementation of practical cycle storage solutions across Edinburgh, for both existing and yet-to-be-developed tenements and flats.
 - Following on from stages 1 and 2, discussion of options with other relevant bodies, especially City of Edinburgh Council, to stimulate the development of a practical action plan for achieving practical improvements more widely, with clear next-steps for the bodies to be involved.

2.2 For the outcomes of the study, SPOKES was looking for 3 main deliverables. The practical information to be collated was to include:

- a) - Technical installation requirements (wall/floor fittings required, floorspace, access space for using it in practice etc). To include, where appropriate, advice on building standards issues and any fire safety implications;
 - Information on costs and a suitable range of potential suppliers;
 - Planning / legal issues for the use of backgreens and conversion of on-street car parking to cycle parking. This will include identifying the permissions required, and any management and maintenance issues, for example where shared resources are involved.
- b) - A user-friendly fact-sheet on achieving practical bike storage solutions in existing tenements and flats, for wide dissemination (or more than one fact-sheet, as appropriate to the material gathered). Something of the order of four A4 pages is envisaged, subject of course to the material gathered during the project research.
- c) Guidance on cycle storage considerations for new-build flats.
 - This will provide guidance on cycle storage in terms of numbers, construction and on-going management. It will be designed to be read by Council officials and housing developers. As such, it will provide both hard-copy and online guidance, with both providing links to detailed technical information.

- 2.3 TPI was appointed to undertake Stage 1. As the work developed and it became apparent that there were issues relating to planning permission, building regulations, listed buildings consent and the approaches of the fire and police services to storage facilities in existing developments, TPI's brief was extended to include the second part of Stage 3. TPI's findings also prompted SPOKES' efforts during the study to be directed more towards existing developments and less so on cycle storage within new developments.

Context

- 2.4 Previous work has been done in Edinburgh looking at residential cycle storage and through the Edinburgh Stair Partnership (of which more details below) a cycle facility was installed at a property in Parkside Terrace, Newington. The installation was funded by the Accessible Transport section of the City of Edinburgh Council who were also carrying out a feasibility study into cycle storage. Further information on this particular scheme is provided in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.5 There has also been work in London examining tenement/flatted cycle storage and a successful scheme was implemented in Hackney. The HomeBikePark project (2004- 2006) aimed to provide convenient and secure bicycle storage for residents in a range of properties across the borough. £20,000 of funding was made available to research, test and install a range of solutions that would meet the aims of the project. **See Appendix 2**.
- 2.6 The project highlighted cost effective solutions that met the requirements of residents in terms of convenience and security.
- 2.7 A more recent investigation by the London Assembly in June 2009 found that a lack of residential cycle storage facilities was proving to be a barrier to cycling. In a situation reminiscent of conditions found in Edinburgh (notably that bikes were being left on communal walkways and proving an easy target for thefts and causing obstruction), a scheme on the Frampton Park Estate in Hackney was awarded £50,000 by Transport for London. 52 bike lockers were introduced on the estate in 2008, thereby minimising the opportunity for theft and vandalism and improving on a previous safety hazard.

3.0 RESEARCH ELEMENTS

TPI's Site Visits

- 3.1 In order to gain an insight into what existing cycle storage conditions are like in Edinburgh, it was essential to visit and consult with local cyclists and would-be cyclists to understand the issues and barriers they are currently faced with relating to storage and possible solutions.
- 3.2 SPOKES issued a newsletter to all members of the organisation making them aware of the project and they were encouraged to contact TPI with their views, opinions and experiences. A number of people responded and were subsequently contacted by TPI either by email or phone to share their views. (A list of the contacts that were made is available in **Appendix 3**.) Aside from email and telephone contact, site visits were arranged where TPI staff members could witness the problems facing cyclists at first hand, as well as see some solutions, a number of which were found to be quite innovative.
- 3.3 This proved to be a very worthwhile exercise as not only was it possible to see the problems of limited storage space but also hear about problems faced in trying to get communal solutions implemented. It quickly became apparent that trying to encourage fellow homeowners, tenants or landlords of the benefits of introducing a communal cycle storage facility was not easy. It was not uncommon to hear of proposals being abandoned as a result of just one or two objectors despite the majority being in favour.
- 3.4 Meetings were organised with cyclists from a variety of areas within the city including Leith, Trinity, Newington, Marchmont, West End and Polwarth. Case studies for each of the properties visited detailing issues and solutions are available at **Appendix 1**.
- 3.5 Tenements visited were different in terms of size, layout and the amount of physical space available for storage and a 'one size fits all' solution would not be sufficient to address the problems arising.
- 3.6 A range of common issues were identified including;
- Lack of in-flat space to store bikes;
 - Lack of communal space;
 - Bicycles being stolen from or vandalised in communal areas;
 - Bicycles causing an obstruction in communal areas;
 - Bicycles abandoned in stairwell's;
 - Uncertainty about planning/ building regulations;
- 3.7 Other issues that arose included the following;
- Just one person can block a proposed communal solution.
 - Some had gone ahead in the hope that others would not object or if there was an initial fuss that it would soon die down.
 - Some backgreens are inaccessible by bicycle either because access is restricted to one or two residents, or because it is physically very difficult to get access with a bicycle. For example, the backgreen might only be accessible via a basement which can only be negotiated via a set of stairs.
 - Some common stair owners make great efforts to maintain very tidy, clean, nicely decorated communal areas and dirty bikes with dirty wheels spoiling carpeted hallways and stairwells areas were not allowed.
 - Some felt that the only practical solutions would need to be in the street.

- 3.8 Although it tended to be “problems” that were discussed on the site visits, there were examples where residents had managed to achieve a satisfactory level of storage for their own needs and the needs of other cyclists in their stair. **Appendix 1** provides greater information on what solutions were being employed.

SPOKES Research

- 3.9 Coinciding with the work TPI was doing on residential cycle storage, SPOKES decided to put out a brief survey (10 questions) aimed at supporting the progress of the project. The survey asked questions specifically with regards to cycle storage and the problems that cyclists face. The main issues raised by those wishing to store their bikes tended to correlate with those that were identified on the site visits. Of those who responded, 45% said they store their bike in a stairwell.
- 3.10 Of those with bikes 54% said they found their storage solution inconvenient but this didn't stop them using their bike. On the other hand 32% said that their current method was unsatisfactory and inconvenient and that it did stop them using their bikes as often as they would like.
- 3.11 92% of respondents suggested that clear, practical information on bike storage solutions would be of interest to them. 88% also said that if they had this kind of information available, they would be pro-active in doing something about cycle storage, be it discussing issues with neighbours, buying equipment or lobbying councillors.
- 3.12 The SPOKES survey backs up the findings of TPI's site visits which show that, on many occasions, significant obstacles exist. Further information on the SPOKES survey can be found at <http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/downloads/technical-and-research/spokes-tenementsflats-bike-storage-project/>

Product Research

- 3.13 Aside from the site visits SPOKES required a review of cycle storage solutions. TPI looked at a variety of options on the web that met the requirements of the brief. including;
- In-flat based storage;
 - Communal (indoor) area storage;
 - On street bike storage;
 - Shared backgreens; and
 - Folding bikes (relevant where very limited storage space is available).
- 3.14 Solutions for each of the above situations were found and are shown in **Table 3.1**. This illustrates the different options available, some further information on where they can be obtained and a brief commentary on the positives and negatives of the product.
- 3.15 Few of the solutions seen during TPI's site visits came from regular cycle storage providers. The consultant was shown 'do it yourself' examples that residents had developed themselves and that are not available from typical cycle storage solutions websites:
- One resident had purchased a large hook from a DIY store which was fixed to a joist in the ceiling. Her bike hangs vertically from the hook by one of its wheels.
 - Others had purchased two large u-shaped hooks which were fixed to battens which in turn were fixed to the wall thereby creating a DIY wall mounted solution that allowed bikes to be hung horizontally.

- In another example a group of residents had built their own wooden frame together with a pulley system which allowed them to hoist bikes up towards the ceiling. However the frame was not very stable and suspending bikes from it proved to be quite a hazardous business.
 - Several people had asked a blacksmith to produce a bespoke solution to fit their own limited space.
- 3.16 Cycle storage products come in a variety of different shapes, sizes, colours and combinations. In fact as the DIY solutions showed, some would not even be labelled as cycle storage products! Without testing the products, it would be unfair to recommend a specific type, although there are factors that contribute to making certain products more appealing than others for tenement cycle storage.
- 3.17 Many of the products available could be suitable for tenement use, however some would require planning permission or other consent to be implemented. Chapter 5.0 summarises what can and cannot be done from a policy perspective and **Appendix 3** indicates in the form of a flowchart the complications that exist around planning permission, listed building consents etc.
- 3.18 More in-depth analysis of the types of products is show in **Table 3.2**. This compares product-types on a number of criteria including cost, ease of use, ease of assembly and possibly most importantly safety and security.
- 3.19 The products identified are those that can be used in all manner of places such as in-flat, stairwells, backgreen or on the street.
- 3.20 Products vary in price depending on size, durability and brand but buying the most expensive product doesn't necessarily mean that the resident is getting the best buy. Much will depend on the space that a resident has available and whether or not it will necessitate opening discussions with the local authority on planning, building regulations or listed buildings' grounds.
- 3.21 A Product Database has been provided at **Appendix 4** which provides links to online vendors of cycle storage products.

Table 3.1 Cycle Storage Products Available

Product and Description	Product Images	Price Range	Positives	Negatives
Pulley System - A pulley system can be used to lift objects towards the ceiling thereby freeing up space at floor level. The system will generally involve a rope and one or may be more pulleys.		£5 - £100	Good for individual cycle storage - in flat, garage etc Products becoming far more durable Inexpensive Utilises roof space as opposed to walls and floor	Can be difficult to use (and assemble) Parts can wear quite quickly Some products can be physically demanding to use Will need DIY equipment to install
Wall Mounts - A wall mount can be made from a variety of materials such as wood, metal or plastic. The mount will hold an object in place against a wall. Some mounts can take two or three bicycles together.		£5 - £370	Fairly easy to assemble Inexpensive Can be purchased in hardware stores, general stores etc Some mounts can be folded up when not in use	Need wall space Can be physically demanding having to lift a bike up and over the mount
Locking Devices - A mechanical fastening device that normally attaches to a stand or other immovable object to prevent theft. They come in a variety of sizes, shapes, colours and strengths.		£2 - £100+	Readily available Relatively cheap Most common form of security and needed anyway Some devices are big enough to lock both wheels and the frame to a stand	Can look strong but cheaper versions can be easy to break Need to be locked to an anchor of some description
Lockers - Boxes that can be made from a variety of materials that store one or more bikes and can be locked to prevent theft. Very secure and prevent vandalism of bicycles.		£300 - £1,500	Secure Keeps bicycles out of view Provides shelter from the weather Prevents vandalism	Large area required inside/ outside Expensive option Planning permission and a building warrant likely to be required particularly in outdoor locations
Cyclepods - Award winning bike storage and cycle storage designs that are stylish, space saving, flexible and highly secure		£60 - £5,000	Look stylish, can be colour coded Good space saving product Can be retrofitted for a particular property "Bomb proof plastic" - increasing safety	Not for individual use Would require a high number of people taking part to keep costs down Cant be fitted individually - needs company to come in Planning permission and a building warrant likely to be required
External Hooks/ Racks/ Stands/ Plantlock - Normally a permanent fixture attached to the floor or wall that a bike can be attached to. They come in a variety of styles and designs although the most common is the 'Sheffield' stand - a thick metal bar bent in the shape of an arch.		£25 - £500	Readily available & widely used Can be inexpensive Doesn't require much space	Still requires additional locking device Planning permission likely to be required in outdoor locations Doesn't provide shelter from the weather
External Shelters - an outdoor facility that provides shelter from the elements. Bikes are normally attached to a rack inside the shelter to increase security		£500 - £1,500+	Variety of different options & colours available Provides shelter from the weather	Expensive and requires space Still requires additional locking mechanism Planning permission likely to be required in outdoor locations
Storage Sheds - A storage device that can hold bikes and other equipment in an outdoor environment. Storage sheds keep equipment dry and can be locked by padlocks or other locking mechanisms		£100 - £2,000	Provides shelter from the weather Doesn't clutter flat/ stair etc	Space required Planning permission likely to be required in outdoor locations Building warrant likely to be required
Folding Bikes - bikes that have been designed to fold into a compact form allowing easier transportation and storage. Different bikes have different folding mechanisms and are ideal for commuters		£80 - £2,000+	Small and portable - good for commuting & storage Becoming more stylish and look better than ever Good alternative if you have limited storage space	Not as easy to use as normal bikes Can be quite expensive
CCTV - Cameras that can be installed and focussed on a particular area or object. Although they don't necessarily deter crime, they can make it easier for Police to identify potential suspects.		£20 - £1,000+	Systems can be relatively cheap Can deter thieves	Still requires additional locking and anchor devices More of a 'reactive' product

*All products vary in size - visit the websites in the Product Database to get further information on dimensions and the space required for installation

Table 3.2 Quick Reference Product Table

Product Options - quick reference table

Product	Security (for a communal area)	Cost (the cheaper the general cost the greater the number of ticks)	Ease of use	Ease of Installation
Pulley System	✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
Wall Mounts	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Locking Devices	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
Lockers	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Cyclepods	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓
External Hooks/ Racks	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
External Shelters	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Storage Sheds	✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓
Folding Bikes (scored without separate means of security)	✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓
CCTV	✓✓✓	✓✓✓✓✓	✓✓	✓✓✓

Key

Excellent	✓✓✓✓✓
Very Good	✓✓✓✓
Good	✓✓✓
Average	✓✓
Poor	✓

*The views expressed in this table are the subjective views of TPI and show an average subjective score for each type of product

4.0 GUIDANCE AND STANDARDS

Current Guidance on Storage

National Guidance on Cycle Parking and Storage

- 4.1 The Government's Scottish Planning Policy statement ² says that "routes and, where relevant, cycle parking and storage should be safeguarded and enhanced wherever possible." (paragraph 169)
- 4.2 The Government's "Cycling by Design" was published in 2010 and provides guidance on acceptable standards for cycle parking. Not only does the guidance provide information on the numbers of cycle spaces required for different land uses, it also suggests the best methods of providing storage including detailed descriptions of Sheffield stands, wall loop, cycle lockers and cycle stores. It also says that "cycle stands which only grip the cycle by a wheel (including butterfly racks and concrete slots) are not recommended as they offer only limited security, can cause a trip hazard to pedestrians and can damage wheel rims".
- 4.3 The document says that guidance "is also relevant to retro-fitting parking capacity", which means it could be used for existing tenements and flats. The standards suggested for flats are "1 space per dwelling" and a further "1 space per 10 dwellings, located at the main entrance, for visitors". [City of Edinburgh Council standards are greater than this as discussed below]
- 4.4 Residential cycle parking (classed as medium to long term use) should be "secure [ideally a locked compound], covered, in an area of surveillance [natural or otherwise] in or adjacent to buildings". "The local situation should be considered to ensure sufficient parking is provided and that it can be extended" If future demand requires it.
- 4.5 Cycling By Design does not suggest that retro-fitting to the recommended standards will be easy in existing tenements. Nor does it discuss planning, building regulations, listed buildings or other issues around consents and permissions. Nor does the document acknowledge possible physical limitations both inside and outside n garden areas of tenement properties

Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004.

- 4.6 Existing storage facilities which require maintenance or repair can be acted upon under the terms of the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004. The Act does not apply to *new* facilities. It aims to ensure that communal parts of buildings are kept in good order by setting up a decision making structure that should make it easier to carry out repairs and maintenance and deal with disagreements between owners. In most cases, this will mean that common repairs can be carried out with the consent of the *majority* of owners but with costs shared amongst *all* owners in the building.
- 4.7 For more information about the Act and how it should work in practice, go to the city council's website and search for a pdf document called "Who Rules the Roof".

Local Guidance on Cycling

- 4.8 A review of current documentation issued by City of Edinburgh Council was carried out in order to ascertain what guidance is in place for cycle storage within tenements in the city.

² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/03132605/0>

4.9 What became apparent is that cycling is actively encouraged and promoted by the council. Their website offers advice on cycling routes, how to get started, local cycling groups and integration between the new tram routes and cycling. It also offers advice on bike security and provides some helpful hints and tips about locking bikes, a list of certified locks (as recommended on www.SoldSecure.com) and information from the UK Home Office. Pages on cycling can be accessed from http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/385/cycling_in_edinburgh/542/cycling.

4.10 However, the website does not discuss cycle storage, what products to look for, who to contact and any particular issues/ barriers that may exist. This is something that should be remedied through the specific action to publish information on storage solutions etc, as set down in the Active Travel Action Plan.

Cycle Parking Standards in New Residential Developments

4.11 Scottish Government policy cycle parking in new developments is contained in Cycling By Design described above.

4.12 The city council's policy is set out in the Edinburgh Local Plan, adopted in 2010, together with the Parking Standards for Development Control document published in December 2009.

4.13 'Policy Tra 5' of the local plan is about 'private cycle parking'. It says that planning permission will be granted for development where the cycle parking and storage provision to be made complies with the standards set out in supplementary guidance. [Currently the December 2009 document.] 'Policy Tra 6' says that cycle parking should be provided close to entrances, preferably in covered and secure locations, to encourage cycle use.

4.14 Relevant parts of the Parking for Development Control document are on page 15. Table 1B is called Cycle and Motorcycle Parking Standards for General Housing For Sale or Private Rent and Local Authority/Housing Association Housing for Rent.

4.15 Studio Flats are required to have 1 cycle parking space per flat whilst "All Other Flats" should have 2 spaces. To ensure that dwellings have suitable provision for couples or families who cycle, parking for at least two bicycles is considered a reasonable requirement by the council.

4.16 In addition, for visitors there should be 1 space per 10 flats with a minimum of 1 space, located near the main building entrance.

4.17 The standard applies only to housing without suitably sized individual garages or suitable externally accessed individual private rear gardens.

4.18 The Council says that the standard can be met by the following:

- First preference (for flats): General or cycle lockers of a suitable size in a communal area on the ground floor of the building or in a location accessible by a ramp suitable for cycle use. For up to 10 bikes this may be a wheeling ramp at the side of the stairs.
- Second preference, either (a) Secure, fully enclosed and weather protected communal cycle parking facilities, either within the building or in a secure vehicle parking area. This cycle parking must be at ground floor level or in a location accessible by ramp suitable for cycle use (as in the first preference). External cycle parking facilities or residents will not be accepted; OR (b) within a general storage area in each property, provided that this is at least 1.85 metres by 1.25 metres by 1.5 metres and the storage area is accessed from a hallway. This option may be used above ground floor level only if there is a lift capable of accommodating a bicycle.

- 4.19 In both first and second preferences cycle parking within secure cycle stores should generally include Sheffield type racks for added security.
- 4.20 Access to cycle parking areas from the street must be straightforward. There should be no steps other than a doorstep. Access to an internal communal cycle parking area must be as short as possible and through an area with hard flooring that is hard wearing and easily cleaned.
- 4.21 Dwellings with private individual rear gardens with reasonable exterior access from the street need not include specific cycle parking provision as this provides the ability to erect a garden shed.
- 4.22 Visitor spaces must be in full public view, closer to the main entrance than a car parking facility and ideally undercover. This can include shelter under overhanging parts of the building. There should be racks or wall mounted loops to which visitor cycles can be locked.
- 4.23 Discussion with one of the Council's principal planners revealed that whilst cycle parking is part of the consideration of new residential developments the Council does not generally refuse planning permission just because it does not have standard bike parking.
- 4.24 A quick review of cycle parking standards for new developments for some other planning authorities revealed variations on the same themes. Here, for example, is the London Borough of Waltham Forest's approach:

"The council wish to see secure cycle storage solutions in all new dwellings. These should be located near entrances, well lit and with plenty of opportunity for natural surveillance. Open sided structures should be avoided as these provide shelter but a poor level of security for residents and visitors. Storage that is visible from the street or other public areas should be avoided to minimise risk of theft."

"Schemes will be favoured that incorporate cycle storage space within the envelope of the building, either within the dwelling itself or as part of the common area. Schemes that include underground or covered parking should provide lockable enclosures for bicycle storage within the car parking area rather than just cycle stands. Security should be provided by a key system or swipe card available to the residents only."

- 4.25 In all instances there should be a lockable door between the public and store area.
- 4.26 Proposals which include overhead storage (pulley systems) should be avoided as these are not suitable for the majority of potential cyclists"

5.0 AGENCY INVOLVEMENT INCLUDING PLANNING, BUILDING REGULATIONS, THE POLICE AND FIRE SERVICES

City of Edinburgh service functions

- 5.1 The research for the study revealed a number of service functions within the council that have a potential role to play with regards to cycle parking and storage facilities in tenements. Whilst the transport strategy team may be taking the lead in taking forward its Active Travel Action Plan, it is likely to need to link up with other services to provide a joined up approach to addressing all the issues that might arise.
- 5.2 In addition to the involvement of several council services, the Fire and Police Services also have roles to play. The police publish advice on security measures including home security, bike locks and bike registration schemes but they do not have a single source of written advice that brings everything together of relevance concerning cycle security in tenements and flats.

- 5.3 Other relevant city council services and initiatives include the following:

The Edinburgh Stair Partnership (ESP).

- 5.4 ESP is the council's property management service that helps homeowners (not tenants) by organising common repairs and regular maintenance of their tenements. It helps by taking away the hassle and worry for owners organising their own repairs. The cost of being in the ESP is £78 per flat per year. All owners must be in agreement to join. Having joined, ESP arranges regular inspections and necessary contractors to carry out repairs etc.
- 5.5 Several years ago ESP was involved in providing the cycle storage scheme in Parkside Terrace discussed earlier, but generally it sees its remit as one of repairs and maintenance and therefore does not usually get involved in cycle storage issues.

Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMO) Licensing and Inspections

- 5.6 All rented properties in multiple occupancy must be licensed by the council. Licensing was introduced to increase the protection of tenants and their neighbours. HMO properties are regularly inspected by the council. Whilst an inspecting officer will write to tenants asking them to remove bicycles they feel are likely to be in the way of an escape route, they have no formal guidelines as to what might constitute an obstruction.
- 5.7 More details about the role of the HMO can be found at http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/1050/multiple_occupancy_homes-regulation_and_inspection/1028/preparing_for_your_hmo_inspection/1

Homeworks

- 5.8 Homeworks is the council's housing advice service for all housing sectors including homeowners and the private rented sector. When interviewed by TPi, one officer said that the only cycling issue that generally arises is how a tenant can get somebody else's bicycle removed because it is felt to be causing an obstruction. If the property is rented then Homeworks responds by directing the person to the HMO Fire Safety officer.
- 5.9 Homeworks also provides a useful guide to homeowners on how to form an Owner's Association. An Owner's Association creates a formal setting where owners can communicate with each other, making it easier to make decisions and reach agreement on things like bike storage solutions. New facilities, repairs and maintenance can be more

easily planned and it means they are not only carried out when it becomes an emergency. The guidance does not give advice on how to implement specific initiatives. More information can be found at:
http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/1392/quick_guide_to_organising_an_owners_association

- 5.10 An important part of the study was to ascertain what can and cannot be done in terms of installing facilities. Consultation was carried out with members of the Planning Department and Building Standards as well as Lothian and Borders Police and Lothian and Borders Fire Service.
- 5.11 The consultation became more important after the initial site visits as a number of residents suggested they were not aware of the guidelines in place and who they should contact in the event they decided to implement a facility to their tenement.

Planning Department

- 5.12 A meeting was held with Paul Devaney, a Principal Planner at City of Edinburgh Council on 24th August 2010 and the outcomes were as follows:
- 5.13 Any type of securing or storage facility for bicycles which is external to and within the boundary of a flatted (tenement or otherwise) property has the potential to require planning permission. This is because a securing or storage facility could be classed as 'development'. This applies to both fixed and freestanding proposals.
- 5.14 Planning permission is not required for any internal development.
- 5.15 Certain types of development have 'permitted development rights', for example, planning permission is unlikely to be required for a cycle facility located within the boundary of a one or two storey dwellinghouse. Flats and tenements, however, do not have these same 'permitted development rights'.
- 5.16 Some types of development have criteria which make it easier for the proposer of a development to assess whether or not planning permission will be required. For example, unless located in a conservation area or next to a listed building, planning permission is not required for a fence that is less than 1 metre in height and within 20 metres of a road. There are, however, no such criteria for cycle securing or storage facilities in tenements or flats.
- 5.17 This means that the Council's planning officer must make an informed, experienced and professional but nevertheless subjective judgement on a case by case basis. There are however certain things the planner will take into account in deciding an application including the following:
- The general suitability of the facility to the local street scene.
 - The impact the proposal might have on both the owners' or their neighbours' amenity, that is, their 'enjoyment' of their environment. For example a storage facility which is likely to reduce the amount of natural light to the interior of a building is likely to be refused.
 - How secure the facility and its contents are likely to be. Increasingly, planners work with the police to ensure that developments of all types are secure. Planners would, for example, have greater concerns about an open hoop type facility proposed to be located some distance from the immediate environs of a building, perhaps in a communal car park, than they would a closed box storage type facility situated next to the property.

Cycling facilities situated on a public road

- 5.18 The roads authority has 'permitted development rights' for many types of facilities such as road signs, traffic signals etc. however the possibility of providing cycle securing or storage facilities either on the road or footway without planning permission is something of a grey area. Paul Devaney expected that planning permission would be required as would the consent of the Council's Streetscape Working Group. Roads Authority Consent would also be needed.

Listed buildings

- 5.19 A proposal which "affects the character or appearance" of a listed building will require Listed Building Consent.
- 5.20 Guidelines and policies on listed buildings are described in the Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) produced by Historic Scotland. This document helps define constraints to development and in particular it helps the listed buildings team at the council assess what 'character' means.
- 5.21 'Character' can be thought of as the look, originality and worthiness for preservation of a building and its features in its current form. A cycle facility which the council officer thinks is likely to degrade the character or appearance of a listed building, inside or out, is unlikely to receive listed buildings consent.
- 5.22 It is important to remember that just because a building is listed does not imply that Listed Buildings Consent will be refused. If the look and feel of the place the facility is proposed to be located in has changed, perhaps over a long period of time, and is now felt to be less worthy of its original status, then consent may be given.
- 5.23 It is conceivable for consent to be given in one part of a tenement building but refused in another part of the same building. For example, the interior of the ground floor may have been degraded over the years whereas the upper floors may have retained original features worthy of preservation and which the officer may feel will be adversely affected by the proposed facility.

Building Regulations

- 5.24 Building regulations say that nothing should be stored in a stairwell or corridor leading to the main entrance . This "void space" should be free from all potential obstructions in the event of fire. This is highly significant since it means that bikes should not be stored on stairs, at the bottom of stairs or between the stairs and front door. Building consent would not be given to a storage facility proposed for these places unless it was a fire-proofed box.
- 5.25 Bikes can be stored in rooms, understairs, cupboards and basements etc provided these spaces are separated from the "void space" by walls or partitions and a fire door. For example it would be possible to partition off an area of the void space and use that for storage.
- 5.26 Bikes can be stored in a space leading to the backgreen provided this is not the only means of escape (the front door being the principle means) and is separated by a fire door from the main "void space".
- 5.27 Externally, any *enclosed* storage solution to be located within 3 metres of the exterior walls of the building or within 1 metre of the boundary of the property requires a building warrant. Enclosures are classed as buildings due to their potential for harbouring a fire. This means that storage boxes and other enclosed storage solutions are classed as "buildings" under the terms of the building regulations.

- 5.28 Physical fixings to the floors or walls either internally or externally do not require a building warrant (this includes racks).
- 5.29 Erection of a partition/ new wall/fire door in order to separate storage space from the “void space” requires a building warrant.
- 5.30 Anyone wishing to erect a partition/ new door is advised to make a sketch and send it into the Building Control team who will advise on whether or not a formal application for a building warrant should be made.

Lothian and Borders Police

- 5.31 Lothian and Borders Police were also asked for their views and opinions on residential cycle storage.
- 5.32 At the moment, the police do not publish or produce any material specifically about tenement cycle storage although they do have a deep understanding of the issues that residents face. Within the city there are six crime prevention officers who are currently working on a project dealing with cycle theft.
- 5.33 Although the police do not endorse specific kinds of storage solution, they do advise people who want to obtain a solution to look at the “*Secured by Design*” website.
- 5.34 *Secured by Design* (<http://www.securedbydesign.com/>) is a national crime prevention initiative which has wide ranging advice on everything from the most secure types of door locking device to advice to planners, architects and developers on ensuring good security in new land use developments. When interviewed by TPI, the planners at the city council said they use Secured By Design for advice on cycle storage facilities in new developments.
- 5.35 The Secured By Design website offers advice to professionals and members of the public about securing their property whether it's ensuring that their house is safe or a bike is secured adequately. The website offers links to products that have passed rigorous testing and are deemed to be secure enough to be endorsed by the police.
- 5.36 The police also advocate data tagging and encourage owners to register their bikes. Secured By Design includes a list of data tagging companies. Tagged bikes that are stolen and found can be linked to an address and returned.
- 5.37 When TPI interviewed the police a view was expressed that cycle storage facilities aren't perhaps given the fullest consideration required at the planning stage of new developments. This is despite the advice in Secured by Design and also the city council's own Cycle Parking Standards. The view was that developers would provide the 'lowest common denominator' facility they could get away with by the planners. This often falls short of the guidance and results in facilities that do not get used. On the site visits TPI came across examples of unused and unwanted facilities in new developments such as 'butterfly racks' and open storage sheds lacking natural surveillance.

Fire Service

- 5.38 Lothian and Borders Fire Service were consulted as well as the police in order to get an insight into any specific problems that they encounter with regards to cycle storage.
- 5.39 As with the police, the Fire Service do not produce any literature specifically aimed at residential cycle storage.
- 5.40 The Fire Service conducts a Home Safety Visit programme. This is a commitment to visit every household about fire safety. One of the primary purposes of a visit to a tenement is to

ensure that escape routes from flats to the designated fire exits remain free from clutter and articles that could obstruct access to fire exits. Bikes can sometimes be a problem, in particular the handlebars on bikes which can often 'stick out' in to the stairwell or corridor. They use a rule of thumb that there should be 700mm to 800mm clearance.

- 5.41 Fire officers will also check lockers to ensure that no articles are stored that could be flammable, such as furniture. If anything was to be stored in the lockers apart from bikes then they would most likely request that the lockers are secured behind a fire door.
- 5.42 The Fire Service has not come across many issues regarding bicycles whilst completing their Home Safety Visits. They have powers under the Civic Government (Scotland) Act which enable them to remove any articles they deem to be in contravention of fire safety regulations. It is very rare that this happens because fire officers are conscious about removing valuable articles. Whether or not to remove is also a subjective issue. What one fire officer may deem to be an obstruction, another may disagree.
- 5.43 The Fire Service has witnessed a variety of cycle storage solutions whilst conducting their home visits. From a Fire Safety point of view they have no issues with elevated suspension (pulley) systems for instance. As long as the devices are fitted well and do not impede escape routes, they would not object. They do however understand that Building Regulations may see this in a different light.

Outcomes of the Consultation

- 5.44 The consultation process proved to be an invaluable exercise. Not only was it possible to get the views of the Police and Fire Services who have particular experience of dealing with bicycles on a day to day basis but it was also possible to ascertain what the reaction of the planners and building controllers would be in terms of introducing different types of facilities in residences.
- 5.45 One of the key learning points from the field work was the apparent lack of knowledge from residents about potential planning and building regulations. Residents were either oblivious to the regulations or sometimes simply ignored them and went ahead with their solutions anyway.
- 5.46 The consultation helped define the regulatory process and the flowchart in **Appendix 5** attempts to simplify this for those who wish to seek a solution that meets the requirements.
- 5.47 In reality, the regulations make it difficult for permissions and consents to be awarded under the circumstances of many existing tenement properties and this can prove frustrating to those who have tried to install a facility through the proper channels.
- 5.48 In contrast to planning and building control regulations, the Police and Fire Service are more concerned with the bicycle as an individual article rather than the facility a bicycle might be secured to or in. The police, however, voiced a belief that more needs to be done with new build properties in terms of installing properly secure cycle facilities.

Other Consultation

- 5.49 Aside from the consultation mentioned above and those contacted for the purposes of the site visits, many other people were contacted and asked about their views, opinions and experiences with regards to cycle storage.
- 5.50 A list of those consulted is provided at **Appendix 3**.

5.51 The project also involved a substantial amount of Internet based research with regards to schemes and projects that were not only based in the Scotland but across the UK and further afield. A list of the relevant websites is provided at **Appendix 6**.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 People who want to install cycle storage in existing tenement properties can struggle for several reasons including:
- lack of private secure space (inside a flat, for example);
 - difficulties in accessing private space with a bike especially if this is on upper floors;
 - lack of communal space for secure storage, inside and/or out;
 - objections from fellow tenants, the landlord or owners to implementing communal facilities;
 - land use planning rules and regulations which apply because the building might be listed or in a conservation area and also because facilities in garden or other external areas of tenements do not have permitted development rights; and
 - risk averse building regulations relating to fire safety.
- 6.2 Not surprisingly the survey by SPOKES showed 32% of respondents use their bikes less often than they would like because of the inconvenience of extracting a bike from its stored location. If this is the figure for cyclists then many more who would like to own a bike probably don't because of inconvenient (or non-existent) storage.
- 6.3 The study showed there to be no "one size fits all" storage solution. Tenements vary enormously in size, shape and decorative condition. Some tenements have limited space at the bottom of stairwells or in front or backgreens. Some backgreens have limited physical access for bicycles or are owned by only a small proportion of all those in the block. Other backgreens have been intricately and often invisibly divided up to give everyone a pocket-sized area of their own.
- 6.4 What quickly became clear was that cooperation between owners or tenants and their landlord or agent is a crucial first step in bringing about a communal storage solution to the premises. For those who own their flats, the city council suggests setting up an Owner's Association and this seems a sensible step as it could be used as a means of agreeing all manner of repairs and improvements to a premises.
- 6.5 The provisions of the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004 clearly apply to owned properties needing common repairs and maintenance, but not new facilities or improvements to premises which would still, by implication, need 100% of owners' consent to go ahead.
- 6.6 Owners Associations and the Tenements Act are not directly relevant to tenants in private rented property, who are obviously in a different situation to owner-occupiers in relation to their abilities to enter into constructive agreements with neighbours. The best way to secure a facility in this case is for tenants to talk to their landlord or their agent. Who pays for the facility is likely to be the biggest question mark with a number of tenants saying that landlords didn't see the commercial value in providing cycle storage. This might change in the future though because there is evidence now that solicitors and estate agents are specifically mentioning secure cycle facilities in their particulars of sale.
- 6.7 Difficulties in bringing about communal solutions have led some to innovative inside-flat solutions. Pulley and wall mount systems are available from product retailers. Pulleys can be quite difficult to fix and cumbersome to work and wall mounts can still mean pedals sticking out into limited space in a corridor. Some people find their own solutions by looking in a DIY store and others have had bespoke solutions developed by a blacksmith. Whether this shows that product manufacturers and retailers don't understand the physical constraints and/or the market for simple in-flat solutions or whether it is just because owners have not been able to source appropriate facilities is hard to say. Certainly there seemed to be significant demand for more product information in the SPOKES survey. The

database of producers and retailers which has been put together during this study and which is to be on the SPOKES website will help overcome sourcing issues.

- 6.8 The study revealed a complex set of permissions and consents governing the implementation of cycle storage solutions which most people would be oblivious of (including many the consultants talked to who had already introduced solutions). In fact a city council planning officer acknowledged that planning rules are usually only enforced after someone has made the council aware of a possible planning infringement. Some types and locations for storage facilities are also affected by buildings regulations, however an infringement of these regulations may not come to light until the owners of one of the flats in the block is to trying to sell their property and the facility is flagged up by a potential buyer's solicitor as lacking the necessary building warrant.
- 6.9 Many of the above issues together work against the Council's targets of 15% of commuting trips to be bicycle by 2020. This is an increase of 150% relative to Scottish Household Survey results in 2007/08. 60% of Edinburgh residents live in tenements. How many don't have a bike, would have and use one if storage was less of an issue is hard to say without more research.
- 6.10 As a start, The Active Travel Plan acknowledges that lack of bike storage at home is a significant hurdle to more cycling and it proposes piloting on-street solutions by 2013. The City Council is now beginning to recognise and get to grips with the issues albeit that it is still at the very earliest stages. The Council's planning authority has also adopted cycle parking standards for new developments although these do not tend to be deal breakers with developers and the Council will generally not refuse planning permission if the proposed provision is not up to standard. This is a pity because the issues applying to existing developments are only likely to be repeated for new builds.
- 6.11 Some Community Councils and other local associations (eg. The Douglas Crescent Gardens Association and Tollcross Energy & Carbon Savings, a Climate-Challenge-Fund project) were strongly advocating a community-led approach to tackling solutions either within tenements or on-street solutions. The City Council also seem to favour this grass-roots approach as part of its pilot on-street programme.

Recommendations

1. That SPOKES continues to work with the Transport Strategy team in the Council in tackling issues as a way of moving towards the Council's 15% target. The Council, willing community associations and SPOKES should work together to find opportunities and develop best practical off-street (in tenement) as well as on-street solutions if the target is to be met.
2. SPOKES may also wish to apply for a further grant, e.g., from any future rounds of the Climate Challenge Fund, to identify and support practical community-led initiatives and develop best practice. A joint bid from SPOKES and TECS with the support of the City Council, might be a useful step forward. Funding could take roll out of a scheme to the next level by allowing for the employment of someone to talk with individual community associations, identify those that are interested and then target specific properties in which to pilot both commercially available or, if necessary, bespoke products.
3. That SPOKES discusses with the Scottish Government the building regulations and permitted development rights as they affect bike storage, or are at least how they should be interpreted by local building standards and planning officers.
4. That SPOKES discusses with the Scottish Government the relevance (or otherwise) of Cycling by Design guidance for existing tenements and suggestions for updates to the guidance in future versions.

5. SPOKES lobbies members of the Planning Committee about the Council's 15% target and the importance of good secure bike storage in new developments.

Appendix 1 – Case Studies

Appendix 2 – Hackney Home Bike Park Report

Appendix 3 – Contacts

Appendix 4 – Product Database

Appendix 5 – Flowchart

Appendix 6 – Websites