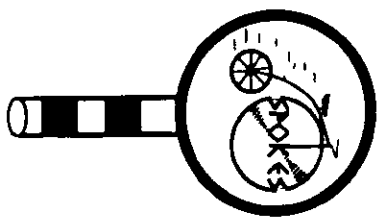


CYCLING SKILLS ON SHARED PATHS



Some pedestrians feel cyclists shouldn't be allowed on any paths. Some are worried or even frightened when a cyclist passes close without warning. SPOKES would like to see all cyclists take pride in not causing even the slightest worry to walkers.

Pedestrians and cyclists should be allies in the fight for safe, healthy and environment-friendly conditions. Pedestrians occasionally complain to councillors, and this makes it more difficult for SPOKES to lobby for new routes.

This often happens, but SPOKES gets a few letters (usually kindly!) from walkers who have been frightened by an inconsiderate cyclist. Cycling on shared paths needs different techniques and skills from road cycling, as explained overleaf. Don't expect to use shared paths for high-speed travel!

BICYCLE BELLS



SPOKES gets occasional letters from walkers who have had a fright from a bike overtaking unexpectedly on a shared path. Many are friendly letters ("As a member of FOE...", "With many happy memories of cycling in my childhood...", etc), but almost without exception they ask why so few cyclists use bells.

There has perhaps been a tendency for cyclists to get more 'hardened' in recent years, with increasing road danger, helmet-wearing etc., and bells have fallen into disuse. On off-road paths the enjoyment side of cycling should predominate! - why not get into a happier mood, symbolised by a bell! If you prefer your voice, make it a friendly one!

TECHNIQUES, SKILLS & COMMON SENSE!

** Be considerate to all walkers, not just the elderly and young children.

** Never speed past walkers, especially from behind. Always be ready to slow right down. Make sure you can stop if anyone unexpectedly moves sideways - children and dogs often do this, and adults do sometimes.

** Let walkers know you are there. Use a bell or say "excuse me". They may be daydreaming - even you do that sometimes!

** Be polite - say thanks if a walker moves for you, especially on a narrow path.

** Leave as much space as possible when passing walkers or cyclists.

** When passing oncoming cyclists, it is normal to pass on the left.

** Slow down near blind spots like bends, entrances and trees.

** In nasty weather, walkers may snuggle inside their coats and not see or hear you. You may not see them. Go slow, and be fit up.

MESSAGE TO PEDESTRIANS

Dear Walker

As you can see, SPOKES urges cyclists to use shared paths sensibly and considerately - and, fortunately, most do so!

Please keep your eye open for cyclists, and move over to give them room. When they slow down or ring their bell for you, why not smile back!

Cyclists do mean busier paths, but this adds considerably to safety at isolated places and times.

Also, many new facilities are there only because cycle groups fought for them - e.g. the North Edinburgh Railway Network, the Airdrie-Bathgate path, and many pedestrian/cycle light-controlled road crossings (e.g. two across Melville Drive in Edinburgh).

Please support us in seeking better conditions for all forms of foot-power!

** If there is a marked-out cycle lane, **keep to your side** except in emergency. Don't get mad if walkers are there - most get the message when there are plenty of cyclists, and if there aren't it doesn't usually cause much trouble! **Legally**, on some marked-out paths, walkers are allowed on either side, though cyclists aren't!

** Some walkers may behave stupidly - that's no reason to do the same!

HOW TO HELP SPOKES

** Please send us your comments on this "code" (address below)

** Ask your councillor for more or improved paths. Name and address from Central CAB (0131 557 1500). Send us the reply

** For information about SPOKES, send SAE (9"x4" if possible) to SPOKES, The Lothian Cycle Campaign, 232 Dalry Rd, Edinburgh EH11 2JG (0131 313 2114).