



The Lothian Cycle Campaign

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SPOKES SURVEY ON ON-STREET BIKE STORAGE RESULTS: SUMMARY

This survey was carried out during November / December 2010 (18 November - 15 December), mostly using an online form (SurveyMonkey). The survey was promoted to Spokes members and others via the Spokes website, Twitter (with various re-tweets) and hard copies were made available at the Spokes Public Meeting on 25 November. 66 responses were received. We requested that respondents only completed the survey if they were indeed interested in using on-street bike parking facilities, if provided. As such, the respondents were self-selected, but the survey responses and comments do still provide some very useful feedback, direct from potential users (mostly experiencing problems with their current arrangements - space too limited space, rusty bikes from rain, neighbour conflicts, thefts etc), to steer the design of the on-street storage facilities pilots currently under discussion with the City of Edinburgh Council.

“I have no back garden and can't keep it in the stairwell for safety, my flatmate has a bike too and in a tenement flat two mountain bikes take up a lot of room. Would be a great facility to have”

“There's a real need in Marchmont, where there are hundreds of bike users, many who resort to chaining their bikes to stairs (inside and outside)”

“I live in a tenement that has a narrow stairwell. There is not enough room to leave bikes without them sticking into the stairs, which is quite dangerous, but as there is not enough cellar space, tenants inevitably lock their bikes to the banisters. Which in turn makes it hard to get bikes out of the cellar and up to the entrance. We could REALLY use a covered outside facility.”

“On-street parking for bicycles with Sheffield racks would be good, but the security of on-street bike lockers would be ideal. They would greatly encourage bicycle use while simultaneously discouraging car use.”

1. The vast majority of respondents (95%) thought that on-street storage would be a good idea in principle. Some left comments about how this would encourage them to use their bikes more.
2. Security (from theft and vandalism) and shelter from the elements are understandably significant concerns.
3. Two-thirds of respondents were willing to walk a fair distance - 100m or more to their local bike storage, though with obvious comments about the trade-off to be made between quality (namely security) and distance from residents' had to walk. The remaining third were willing to walk 50m to bike storage. Concerns centred more on worries about theft and vandalism (if it wasn't so easy to keep an eye on bikes left there) than convenience as such.
4. When asked about the level of security from theft necessary for the storage to be an attractive option for the respondent, compared to current storage options, over half (53%) voted for enclosed and lockable communal containers (e.g., a bike shed with keys/PINs for access). Interestingly, this option was more popular than enclosed, lockable individual containers (39%) – perhaps as respondents had reflected on the greater cost of these. However, there was still significant interest in more straightforward but less secure options, such as simple Sheffield racks (29%), or a more sophisticated type of bike stand that could give greater security in combination with the owners' own locks, e.g. by enclosing a wheel (38%). For some though, insurance requirements are a concern (typically, acceptable overnight bike storage must not be classed as "outside").

“At this point anything with a permanent rain cover is an attractive option. . . . I think a simple 'bus shelter for bikes' type design would be a good start for 'commuter' bikes.”

“My main reason for wanting storage is to protect my bike from the rain. I can securely lock it to a lampost but its getting rusty!”

“Something lockable and covered would be ideal. Buggies and pushchairs could also be stored there, locked to sheffield stands etc.”

“Visible will make them more secure & encourage their use”

“Why out of sight? cars aren't. Also: I hope that visibility would deter theft.”

“Possibly yes even if uncovered - current bike store suffers frequent vandalism and theft to bikes; although currently undercover, would rather have a rusty bike than no bike...”

5. Responses about the visibility or otherwise of bikes were split, with a small majority (55% compared to 44%) considering bikes visible to passers-by to be preferable for crime prevention.

6. CCTV coverage did not appear to be a priority feature, compared to covered / enclosed / lockable storage to protect against theft, damage and weather. Nearly half (46%) considered it not very important (noting concerns such as poor deterrent effect, and potentially intrusive); most of the remainder considered it potentially a good idea, with just a few stating it to be very important.

7. Noting that people’s views about on-street bike storage range widely, we asked respondents for their perceptions of the views that others living near them might have. A majority (58%) thought that neighbours would, on balance, be in favour of providing more bike storage in the form of some type of on-street facility (e.g., racks, possibly covered), particularly where the area was one with a high prevalence of bikes locked up outside. Only 14% thought not, with the rest saying they didn’t know.

“Tenement (non-bike owners) neighbours would be pleased to have bikes taken away from stair. Most do not own car, so would have no reason to complain about fewer car parking spaces.”

8. Finally, we asked, whether on-street storage (with overnight use in mind) was installed using Sheffield Stands racks or similar, in an area where it could clearly be seen, respondents would use it in preference to current storage option(s). A third of respondents said yes, if covered, and 12% said they would use it even if uncovered. Another third said no, but with nearly a quarter saying ‘maybe’ (e.g., if it was acceptable for insurance). Some noted that uncovered racks would be useful for temporary storage, and of course useful to others aside from resident, e.g., when visiting friends who live in tenement flats (encouraging more cycling). A few respondents also mentioned that they would be willing to pay reasonable rent for a good quality secure facility (e.g., of £20-£50/year - under £1/week).

Spokes, December 2010