

Name of principal petitioner – Peter Hawkins

Title of Petition – Princes Street for People

Petition Statement [max 250 words][what action you wish the council to take]

[This petition is submitted by Peter Hawkins in association with Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign].

We request the Council to make Princes Street a place where people can move about, relax, shop, and enjoy this marvellous street in peace and safety; and where pedestrians, cyclists and trams co-exist well.

In particular, we request that Princes Street is freed of all motor traffic.

The Council can then develop the kind of Princes Street envisaged in the council's Jan Gehl report ...

- safe, welcoming and attractive for pedestrians and cyclists
- inclusive, catering for people of all abilities
- encouraging tourists to linger, shop, tell their friends, and return
- retaining public transport accessibility, by tram, nearby buses and possibly a free electric shuttle-bus
- with a high-quality 2-way cycle route linking adjacent cycle networks to each other and to the shops and pleasures of Princes Street
- increasing shop footfall, competing with Glasgow's pedestrianised streets
- developing a 'cafe culture'
- with garden and castle views uninterrupted by motor traffic
- not dominated by traffic noise and air pollution
- and eliminating the tramline cyclist crashes and injuries now occurring regularly.

The overall aim is a Princes Street with the sense of 'place' which it deserves as Scotland's premier street - where people come and spend time, safe and welcoming for active travel by foot and bike, and enabling Scotland's iconic street to achieve its full potential for residents and visitors alike. A vision in Edinburgh - but a reality already in many European cities.

Action taken to resolve issues of concern before submitting the petition

Many actions have been taken by ourselves and others over recent years and yet the Council has failed to take any decisive action to provide the people-friendly environment in Princes Street which would be expected of the premier street in any European capital city. Actions taken, by ourselves and others, include...

- ◆ In 2009 Spokes highlighted the future of Princes Street in our Bulletin 104 [www.spokes.org.uk/bulletin]. 12,000 copies were circulated, including to all councillors. The Deputy Council Leader said that Princes Street for pedestrians, cyclists and trams only "would allow us to compete with the likes of Paris, Barcelona and Prague. It's a fantastic street; it would be absolutely splendid." Visit Scotland said it would "help promote Edinburgh around the world." The Transport Convener promised a feasibility study.
- ◆ In 2010, with little having happened, Spokes returned to the issue [reported in Spokes Bulletin 107] holding a Princes Street public meeting addressed by the Transport Convener.

A public consultation, including an option for a 2-way traffic-free cycle route on one side of the tram, was promised. This has not yet happened.

- ◆ In 2011 the Gehl report on the city centre future was published... [www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/princes-st-city-centre]. It included Princes Street recommendations almost identical to ours above [see Gehl report volume 4 – Recommendations].
- ◆ In December 2011, a month-long break in the tram works allowed a traffic-free Princes Street. Spokes publicised this widely [for example, see pictures and discussion at www.spokes.org.uk/2011/12/princes-street-paradise] but the opportunity to continue this when tram works were complete was not taken. In 2012 Jan Gehl again visited Edinburgh and delivered the Sir Patrick Geddes Commemorative Lecture, *Cities for People*, in which he lamented the continuing absence of decisive action on Princes Street and the whole central area.
- ◆ In November 2012 a report by John Franklin for the Cyclist Defence Fund analysed the many tramline cyclist crashes which have already occurred and made recommendations, of which the prime recommendation is that Princes Street be designated for trams, pedestrians and cyclists only.
- ◆ Further articles on Princes Street will be published as appropriate at www.spokes.org.uk.