

## FUTURE OF LEITH WALK

As you know, Leith Walk is in a very bad state due to the maintenance hiatus during the now aborted tram works. The Council has allocated a considerable sum of money (£3m we think) to resurface and generally restore Leith Walk.

As far as we understand it, the current plans are basically to retain the pre-existing layout, with car parking more or less as it was, and with the downhill bus lane and uphill cycle lane. We are promised that the cycle lane will be red, using the new method of mixing red chippings with the tarmac, rather than the previous system of laying red thermoplastic on top [see page 4 of Spokes Bulletin 112].

We understand that this is all expected to happen this autumn.

We have often pointed out to the council the importance of Leith Walk as a direct link between Leith and Edinburgh, and the need for vastly improved cycling conditions. A survey of nearly 100 people at a Spokes public meeting identified Leith Walk as one of the top corridors needing high quality cycling conditions [see report and summary at [spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk) : documents : odds& ends : public meetings : 23.3.10]. In the early days of tram planning we tried very hard, but unsuccessfully, to get a more bike-friendly layout, with a report by a Dutch bike/tram specialist consultant [the report is at [spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk) : documents : public transport : tram : 0907].

Despite all this, our latest information until very recently was that there are no plans to provide more welcoming cycling conditions beyond the resurfacing and reinstating the uphill cycle lane - not even at particular danger points such as uphill at London Road roundabout.

Some in the council are hoping that within 5-10 years the council will get more tram funding and will just go ahead with the existing plans as they are.

**HOWEVER** pressure is growing in the local community, in part through Greener Leith, for a complete rethink on Leith Walk, particularly as so much money is to be spent.

As a result the Council may be having a rethink, or may be considering having a rethink. There are certainly different views within the council, some wanting to keep things more or less as they are, others wanting something far more pedestrian and cycle friendly.

**A public meeting is being held by Leith Neighbourhood Partnership to discuss the future of Leith Walk, on Wednesday 21 March, 7-9pm (refreshments at 6.45) at Lorne Primary School, Lorne Street.**

*A poster for the meeting is here...*

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/stvedinburgh/6981672897/in/pool-1914578@N20/lightbox/>

*Some of the great ideas from Greener Leith are in this article...*

<http://www.greenerleith.org/greener-leith-news/2012/3/14/still-wanted-a-vision-for-leith-walk.html>  
[especially section 2, 'Design Leith Walk for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Buses']

*And there's an excellent STV Local article here...*

<http://local.stv.tv/edinburgh/news/business/31159-edinburgh-tram-works-blamed-as-leith-walk-ranked-amongst-uk-worst-for-cycling/>

**IF YOU LIKE THESE IDEAS, PLEASE GO ALONG TO THE MEETING AND MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!!**

**However, it will take a great deal of pressure to get a major rethink, so don't just leave it there ... also raise this with your councillors [www.writetothem.com] and with candidates in the forthcoming local elections. Ask them, if elected, will they commit to fighting for the sort of Leith Walk you would like to see.**