

Spokes circular to members in or near the Lothians [outside Edinburgh] 23.8.2014

Note: If you wish to support or comment on any of the items below, email your local councillors and ask them to follow up the matter. Find your councillors at www.writetothem.com. We would appreciate a copy of your email(s).

This circular contains the following sections...

- A. Info for all areas
- B. Mainly East Lothian
- C. Mainly MidLothian
- D. Mainly West Lothian

A. ALL AREAS

A1. SPOKES SUMMER COMPETITION – *HELP!!* - more entries needed from the Lothians! *Enter now – competition ends 5 September*

Your chance to win first-class rail tickets, a £50 Edinburgh Bicycle voucher, great food vouchers, film tickets ... even a hair-do (ideal if you wear a helmet perhaps!)

Everyone who cycles has many memorable moments – delightful, scary, exciting, or whatever. Your first ever ride; a pothole experience; that time you tried cycling with your hands on the opposite handlebars; trying out a wonderful new cyclistroute; cycling with your kids for the first time; and many more...

Please tell us one (or two) of your most memorable! We're hoping for a big range of entries which we can use to show the multifarious pleasures and pitfalls, fun and follies, of getting about by bike.

Enter now!! - quick and simple entries of 2 or 3 sentences are welcome, or you can go into more detail and/or include a picture or drawing.

Full details in the June 28 news item at spokes.org.uk – or go direct to...
www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/2014/06/competition-my-memorable-moment/

A2. FORTRESS WAVERLEY – *email your MSPs if you've not yet done so*

Many Spokes members from outside the city use Waverley Station with a bike, and several have contacted us about Network Rail's Waverley Station cycling ban on the entry ramps - forcing bikes, pushchairs, luggage and large numbers of commuters and tourists onto the narrow footways whilst the wide adjacent roadway is vacant. See our story here...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/2014/07/fortress-waverley/>

The story has now also reached The Guardian – our website news item above includes a link to the Guardian story.

Several MSPs are already taking this up, but continuing pressure is vital. ***If you are affected, please do contact your MSPs*** – the more emails the better! It is very important that we keep up the pressure on this as there are slight hints that there could be improvements.

A3. LOCAL CONSULTATIONS & PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Check your council website every so often for anything where comments may be useful. Here are the addresses we have...

Consultations

EL <http://eastlothianconsultations.co.uk/>

ML <http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/consultation/open>

WL http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/Council_and_government/consultations/

Planning applications – see the links below to find the latest applications in each Lothians area

NB - there's a Spokes factsheet about commenting on Planning applications...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wordpress/documents/advice/lobbying-councils/>

EL www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/200192/planning_online/1374/planning_applications_and_weekly_lists

ML

www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/180/development_management_planning_applications/374/planning_applications-search_and_make_comment

WL www.westlothian.gov.uk/1210/161/PlanningApplications/

Points to look for... Do plans for new developments, shops, businesses, etc include bike parking and/or storage? Do new residential developments provide adequate and secure bike storage? What about access or connections to nearby networks, etc, etc?

A4. TWITTER @SPOKESLOTHIAN

We have an active twitter presence <https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian>. Please check it out every so often, and RT any tweets you support. The latest Spokes tweets now also appear on our website in the right-hand column.

B. MAINLY EAST LOTHIAN

B1. NEW SPOKES EAST LOTHIAN MAP – *Intro offer ends 31 August*

Our new **East Lothian** cycle map is just out, together with a smartphone version of our forthcoming printed new **Glasgow** cycle map. *Both are available with special offers just now.*

Our **East Lothian map** is £5.95 in the shops, but **just £5** including post from Spokes, St Martins Centre, 232 Dalry Road, Edinburgh EH11 2JG [by cheque] **until 31 August**. [We will honour any £5 orders received by 2nd September, to catch any orders posted on the 31st].

The map got a write-up in East Lothian News... <http://www.eastlothiannews.co.uk/news/local-news/cyclists-shown-way-ahead-in-east-lothian-1-3508536>

Our **Glasgow downloadable geospatial smartphone map** is free until the printed version is available [probably early autumn].

More details on these and our other maps at... www.spokes.org.uk/spokes-maps/

B2. EAST LOTHIAN RAIL SURVEY - *by 29 August*

If you use rail services in East Lothian – whether for work or leisure – your views are wanted by the new East Lothian Community Rail Partnership [ELCRP]. It's a great opportunity to raise bike/rail issues, as well as any other rail issues that concern you. Please complete this survey...

https://eastlothianconsultations.co.uk/infrastructure/east-lothian-community-rail-survey/consult_view

ELCRP is only the second CRP to be created in Scotland, following the success of several in England. The objective of a CRP is to encourage more locals and visitors to use rail, and it can identify improvements which are needed to help achieve this, though it cannot do active political lobbying.

http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/news/article/1687/new_east_lothian_community_rail_partnership

You may also be interested in RAGES – this is a campaigning group to improve East Lothian rail services and for the opening of new local stations at East Linton and Reston. <http://www.rages.org.uk/>

B3. NORTH BERWICK CYCLE GROUP - 'CYCLEFORTH'

A new cycle campaign group has been created for North Berwick area., with objectives very similar to those of Spokes – to get better conditions for using a bike and to get more people cycling, especially for everyday journeys.

Amongst other ideas, Cycleforth is planning a survey of the new John Muir Way cycle route, which has been rather slapped into place without any real consideration of the cyclists who might use it – the group will be pressing for safety measures and tweaking of the route. Another aim is signed family-friendly cycle routes from the railway station to the two castles – little groundwork is required, just a commitment to get it done.

For more info or to join the group... email committee@cycleforth.org.uk

B4. DREM – GULLANE PATH CAMPAIGN

This long and persistent campaign by 3 local people has reached a new stage, with a compromise route suggested (which will need just 50m of new connecting path). Your views are requested by the campaign. For more details and the email address, see...

<https://sites.google.com/site/dremgullanepath/newsletter>

C. MAINLY MIDLOTHIAN

C1. LOANHEAD – GILMERTON PATH NOW OPEN!! - *photos wanted*

The long-awaited Edinburgh disused railway section of this route is now complete and the council says it is receiving very positive feedback from users. The new path runs from the junction of Gilmerton Station Road/Lasswade Rd to an underpass of the city bypass, linking to Midlothian's existing path to Loanhead and Roslin.

For the next Spokes Bulletin we'd like photos of this path [in the next 2 or 3 weeks]. If you can supply any photos for possible use, please email them to DaveduFeuATgmail.com. Photos should not just show an empty path – they must include one or more people on bikes (with or without walkers too). Also, photos should not be all-helmeted; if there are several cyclists, at least half should be unhelmeted.

Edinburgh Council is hoping also in the next year to provide a better link further into the city from the Edinburgh end of the above new railway path.

C2. UPPER TWEED PATHS VOLUNTEER WORKCAMP – *change of date – now starts 20 Sept*

If you fancy helping build a cyclerooute, led by Sustrans founder John Grimshaw, there is a workcamp to help convert an initial 4km section of the Peebles-Lyme disused railway. This will be a useful alternative to the main road, and another improvement to the Solway-Forth C2C route [for which a map was sent to all members in the summer mailing].

For more on the Upper Tweed Paths Project see <http://uppertweedrailwaypaths.org.uk/>

For more on the workcamp, click here...

<http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=7d93db0a3b5c57968a0ab93a5&id=66a1669d31&e=375539ae3c>

and email david@chain-events.co.uk.

"The work will involve clearing overhanging vegetation and shrubs from the track-bed and bridges, sorting out blocked drains, drilling weep holes in tunnel, removing the brick portal from tunnel, laying stone path etc .. counting bats guddling salmon .. all good fun and cameraderie!" ... "Persons with additional skills and relevant qualifications especially welcome .. First Aiders, chain sawers, digger/dumper drivers, etc."

D. MAINLY WEST LOTHIAN

D1. LINLITHGOW CANAL TOWPATH – *please email*

In addition to the previously-announced funding for links from the towpath to the Leisure Centre and Academy, Scottish Canals has now won an offer of £45m from Sustrans to extend towpath surfacing from the canal basin, past St Magdalene's, to the east end of the town. However, to receive this cash, Scottish Canals has to raise a matching £45m, and do the work by April 2015. They are hopeful of £35m from West Lothian Land Trust, but still need the remaining £10m.

If you'd like to see this project happen please email your councillors asking for their help in raising the final £10m, to get the towpath surfaced and to ensure that the Sustrans £45m offer is not lost. Find your councillors at www.writetothem.com.

D2. LINLITHGOW COMMUNITY TRAVEL INITIATIVES & INFORMATION

Transition Linlithgow has set up an innovative **car-sharing scheme**, which can assist people to live car-free or car-lite. More info at...

<http://transitionlinlithgow.org.uk/projects/car-club/>

Deborah Paton of TL *Transition Linlithgow* has also produced a detailed blog posting on **non-car transport opportunities** in and around the town...

<http://transitionlinlithgow.org.uk/live-a-little-linlithgows-car-free-or-simply-car-lite-toolkit/>

Finally, *Linlithgow Plus* has a constant stream of **voucher offers**, several geared to non-car transport – for example a combined ticket for the Palace and rail travel to the town..

<http://www.linlithgowplus.org.uk/latest-offers.php>

D3. BATHGATE: STARLAW WEST – BOGHALL ROUNDABOUT 50MPH? - *feedback by 3 Sept*

West Lothian Council has won Sustrans funding for a cyclepath along the west verge between Starlaw West Roundabout and Boghall Roundabout, Bathgate.

To improve safety for cyclists and walkers who will use the cyclepath, council officers are considering reducing the speed limit between the two roundabouts to 50mph. This requires a Traffic Regulation Order and a decision by councillors. A report on the 50mph proposal is being prepared by officers for councillors and they are seeking comments.

If you'd like this speed limit reduced to 50mph, or have other comments, please email Ronnie.Fisher@westlothian.gov.uk before 3 September with your views.

D4. LIVINGSTON PATH NETWORK – WHEELING RAMPS – *email your ideas to the council*

West Lothian also has won funding to install wheeling ramps on the Livingston path network – presumably this is at steep access points which currently only have steps. The council would welcome comments from people who know the area, and suggestions as to which would be the most useful locations. Please email Ronnie.Fisher@westlothian.gov.uk or phone him 01506 282330.

D5. WLC LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, MAIN ISSUES REPORT [MIR] – *Consultation, with September exhibitions*

The Council is consulting on the MIR stage in producing its new Local Development Plan. This will be a hugely important document, governing how land is used in West Lothian, including many transport aspects and implications, such as planning development in such a way as to reduce the need to travel. Comments to the consultation from Spokes members would be really valuable.

The documentation is extensive, but short comments on one issue alone, such as cycling, are absolutely fine.

There will be a series of drop-in staffed exhibitions where you can also leave comments, all 10.00am-18.30pm.

- Almondvale Shopping Centre Monday 8 September
- Bathgate Partnership Centre Wednesday 10 September
- Civic Centre, Livingston Tuesday 23 September
- Fauldhouse Partnership Centre Thursday 25 September
- Burgh Halls, Linlithgow Tuesday 30 September

For more info on the exhibitions and links to all documents.. go to <http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/MIR>

The most important documents for us are...

-  [Main Issues Report August 2014 \[3Mb\]](#)
-  [Main Issues Report August 2014 \[3Mb\]](#)

There are also many other documents if you have time – but it is much more important to comment on what concerns you than to try and read everything!! We would appreciate a copy of your comments.

The Council's email address for comments and any queries on the MIR is wlldp@westlothian.gov.uk.