



SPOKES

THE LOTHIAN CYCLE CAMPAIGN
St. Martins Church, 232 Dalry Road, Edinburgh EH11 2JG
☎ 031-313-2114 (ansaphone)

OBJECTIVES

1. To encourage cycling and to publicise its benefits for the community and for individuals.
2. To ensure that council and government policies actively encourage cycling and make full provision for it, as part of an overall transport strategy through which all people can enjoy cheap, safe, efficient and pleasant travel for work and leisure.

John Ferguson
SEPA Head Office
Eskme Court
Castle Business Park
STIRLING FK9-4TR

25.3.97

Dear Sir

NATIONAL WASTE STRATEGY, SCOTLAND - CONSULTATION

I enclose our comments on the above.

- ① The report includes detailed consideration of the environmental impact of the waste treatment process - but little consideration of the impact of the waste itself, especially where it is not treated at all, or not even collected. Litter is a good example, spoiling the visual environment, causing death & injury to wildlife, and requiring expensive cleaning of roads & paths.
- ② As an example of the environmental effects of waste itself, we have evidence that broken glass on cycle routes is a significant deterrent to use of such routes. In particular, this is one of the main areas of comment by our members on their annual general forms.* For example, comments from two members...
"We've almost given up using the path from Trinity to Craigmard, due to glass!", and
"On the first day of the week I use the path. If there is too much glass I use the road instead for the rest of the week."
Thus some cyclists are forced from cycle route to road, whilst others are deterred from cycling at all - eg for family rides where roads are felt too dangerous. So this form of waste can partially subvert the environmental and safety objectives of central and local government as regards cycling.
- ③ In a "National Waste Strategy", such consequences of different forms of waste should be discussed, and action proposed to combat them. Specifically on the question of broken glass the obvious solution of path-sweeping is insufficient. Edinburgh Council, for example, sweeps its asphalted cycle paths weekly, but this is not enough to avoid the above deterrent effect, and is also a considerable expense.

P.T.O.

Although bottles are not the only source of broken glass, we have heard anecdotally that States in the U.S. where there are bottle deposits have a much less severe problem of broken glass on the roads.

④

We are pleased to note that your draft strategy refers to the possibility of deposits, and other economic instruments aimed at individuals, to encourage recycling and waste minimisation. However, the strategy seems heavily angled towards voluntary agreements with industry. Unfortunately deposits, which used to be common in the UK, have been phased out by industry, and voluntary agreements therefore seem unlikely — especially in the near future. SEPA should not be afraid to recommend legal requirements in such cases.

There is an even more compelling case for compulsion if this could assist in problems such as glass on cycle routes, where the consequences of the waste can have an adverse effect on government objectives — such as the government national target to double cycling by year 2002.

Economic instruments aimed at individuals to achieve environmental objectives have a very successful precedent in the higher tax on leaded-petrol, and are likely to be widely accepted by the public if the objectives are fully explained, as happened in the case of leaded petrol.

Yours Sincerely,

Dave du Feu

* We are also receiving many interesting and specific comments on this, written onto the forms of a petition we have just launched on the need for better cycle route maintenance by Edinburgh Council.