

## PAPERS FOR SPOKES AGM, 17 JUNE 2015, 6pm-6.30pm

### AGENDA

1. **Group reports** Reports are below. They will not be presented verbally (apart from the treasurer report) but this is an opportunity to ask questions to the relevant group coordinators about any of the reports. Questions can also be asked by email at any time – email addresses are listed before the group reports.
2. **Treasurer report**
3. **Appointment of treasurer**
4. **Spokes status** The meeting is asked to agree the proposal below
5. **AOB**

#### **Proposal for Spokes to become a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO)**

[Paul Ritchie, treasurer]

[www.scvo.org.uk/setting-up-a-charity/decide-on-a-structure/scottish-charitable-incorporated-organisation](http://www.scvo.org.uk/setting-up-a-charity/decide-on-a-structure/scottish-charitable-incorporated-organisation)

#### Background

Spokes is currently an unincorporated association. The principal advantage of this status is simplicity – there are few regulations to abide by. The disadvantage is that it means spokes cannot enter into legal agreements of any sort and cannot be sued. Whilst the latter sounds attractive, what happens if someone is harmed on a spokes event and wishes to sue, is that they will sue one or more members, probably committee members, ride organisers and the like. Whilst this is unlikely to happen, the consequences for individual members could be very significant indeed. The insurance spokes holds provides some reassurance but as with any policy will not pay out in all circumstances.

#### Conversion to a SCIO

A SCIO can be sued in it's own right and members liability is limited to a maximum of £1 each. Committee members are very unlikely to be sued individually provided they have acted with a reasonable degree of diligence. There are a number of other pros and cons to becoming a SCIO, principally;

- It is possible to claim gift aid on donations received provided various conditions are met. This might increase spokes income by around £2,000 a year
- There are more regulations to abide by so a little more formality in the running of spokes will be required than has been the case in the past
- Spokes accounts will need to be independently examined at a cost of perhaps £500 - £1000 a year
- There will be more administrative work in preparing accounts, operating the system required to support gift aid claims etc

Spokes Resources Group discussed this and a special meeting was held of those familiar with the issues [those in (1) below]. On balance, the view taken was that it is worthwhile making the change to a SCIO.

#### It is therefore proposed that the AGM agrees ...

1. to establish a working group consisting of  
Ian Maxwell, Paul Ritchie, Sandy Scotland, Dave du Feu  
with the power to co-opt others
  2. to authorise the working group to go ahead with the process of converting spokes to a SCIO
  3. that the working group will prepare revised Spokes objectives which remain consistent with the current Spokes objectives, whilst also being compatible with SCIO requirements, and that these will be emailed to members before finalisation.
-

# GROUP & RESPONSIBILITIES REPORTS [in alphabetical order]

A. Bike/Rail	Undertaken by Ewan Jeffrey [special responsibility rather than 'group']	BikeRail[AT]spokes.org.uk
B. Maps	Small group of 3 specialists, Ian Maxwell, Tim Smith, David Langworth	imaxwell[AT]gn.apc.org
C. Planning	Working group, convenor Sandy Scotland	scotlandsa[AT]yahoo.co.uk
D. Resources	Working group, convenor Dave du Feu	davedufeu[AT]gmail.com
E. Rides	Organiser Stuart Threlfall	stuart[AT]snowcycle.co.uk
F. Treasurer	Paul Ritchie	paul.ritchie[AT]virgin.net

**More information on much of what follows is on the Spokes website.**

---

## A. BIKE/RAIL

These are the principal bike/rail issues addressed over the last year.

### ScotRail Franchise

The potentially most significant development as regards bike/rail has been the award of a new ScotRail Franchise. Spokes commented in detail on the Transport Scotland (TS) consultation on the ScotRail Invitation to Tender and was pleased to see a lot about cycling in the final document. We requested and obtained meetings with all of the bidders. It was clear that some were rather more cycling aware than others. Abellio were awarded the franchise, with the promise of a range of cycle related facilities and took over on 1 April. Although Spokes is pleased with the general tone of Abellio's approach, we would like to see detail and await with interest the imminent publication of its Cycling Action Plan, which will include information about their Bike and Go/ Bike Hub plans. Spokes continues to be active on the ScotRail Cycle Forum, whose frequency is to increase to quarterly from six-monthly.

### Fortress Waverley

The most high profile current bike/rail issue is the dreadful access situation at Edinburgh Waverley, arising from the summary closure of both ramps, including the cycle lane on the north ramp. *Spokes* and many others (including MPs MSPs and Edinburgh councillors) have made repeated complaints to *Network Rail*, which have, until recently, unfortunately fallen on deaf ears. However, the newly appointed head of the newly created *Scotrail Alliance* (which is to jointly manage *Abellio Scotrail* and *Network Rail Scotland*) has recently acknowledged to Spokes that the current situation needs to be re-examined. The Infrastructure Committee at the Scottish Parliament is also investigating access to major Scottish stations and taking evidence from senior politicians such as Cllr Hinds, and from Network Rail.

### Haymarket Bike Parking

Throughout the *Network Rail Scotland* consultations during the redevelopment of Haymarket Station *Spokes* pressed for improved bike parking and other cycle related facilities. Nothing extra at all was provided, despite the existing rack and surrounding railing being heavily oversubscribed. However, thanks to a *Sustrans* application to the *Scottish Stations Fund* which was supported by *Spokes*, a new 90 space bike parking facility is to be built in front of the historic station building. Although the funding and listing building consents etc are in place, it is currently being held up within *Network Rail*!

### Bikes on Trains

*Spokes* continues to be concerned that cyclists are regularly refused access onto trains which otherwise have lots of empty seats, because of the inflexibility of internal seating layouts, and we have asked for genuine stakeholder consultation and fresh thinking on:

-Good cycle carriage provision on the new EGIP electric rolling stock and the adapted layouts of existing stock for the Border Railway, Scenic Lines and Inter-City HST trains

-Improved, consistent cycle carriage provision on current rolling stock. Particularly: why no dedicated cycle space on Airdrie-Bathgate trains, why some CI 170 have cycle zones at each end but others at one end only and why CI 158s have three different cycle zone styles varying between 1, 2 and 4 cycles?

### Bike Reservations

We are pressing for Internet bike reservations to be reinstated on the *Scotrail* website and for improved cycling information generally on the *Scotrail* website - such as station specific cycle access route maps

## **Tandem Trial**

We have asked the new *Scotrail* management to reconsider the ban on tandems, when there is ample space for them on CI 380 trains, as used to North Berwick.

## **Postscript - Access to Stations**

Spokes has just made a submission to the Scottish Parliament Inquiry into Access to Stations. We covered the immediate access issues at Waverley, Haymarket and the new Edinburgh Gateway station; and also the non-integration of cycling access into project funding when stations are opened, as on the Bathgate/Airdrie and Borders lines, so that links are often delayed, often for years, while local councils and Sustrans try to come up with funding.

---

## **B. MAPS**

Spokes Maps is a separately constituted group but it works closely with Spokes to publish cycle maps for Edinburgh, the Lothians and Glasgow. The reason for separation was to obtain VAT registration and also to bring together the people who do the work on researching, drawing and publishing of the maps. The people who work on the maps are paid for some of the work that they do, but all involved also contribute a lot of extra time for free.

Spokes has published cycle maps for nearly 30 years - the first Edinburgh edition appeared in 1987 and we are now working on the tenth edition of Edinburgh and the second edition of Glasgow, with the East, West and Midlothian maps all in their 3rd or 4th editions.

For the very first edition of Edinburgh we were offered a financial subsidy by Edinburgh Council but we didn't actually need to draw down that funding, and since then the maps have been self funding and have generated a regular income for Spokes. Over this period we have published nearly 200,000 copies.

We used to accept advertising from cycle shops on the back of the Edinburgh maps, but decided to use all the space for editorial after a few such editions. All of the maps are for sale, some through book and bike shops, some direct through stalls and events and some on line. In addition we have produced free versions of both the Edinburgh and Glasgow maps in recent years with subsidy from the Climate Challenge Fund, with the maps being given out as part of projects to encourage use of sustainable transport.

When Spokes started one of the most frequent questions we were asked was "Where can I ride my bike?" The maps grew out of the need to answer that question and provide easy access to information about offroad cycle facilities, cycle lanes and quiet streets. Over the years we have added cycle shops, car club sites, gradients, signposted routes and cycle hire sites, along with useful information about cycling techniques, places to visit and cycle campaigning on the back of the maps.

The East, West and Midlothian maps are all drawn by Tim Smith on our own map base. The Edinburgh cycle map has used three different base maps over the first nine editions, starting out as a number of colour overlays on a black and white base map. This became a digital map drawn on computer in full colour by edition number five. It is now being redrawn for the 10th edition on a fresh base which is geo-referenced so it can be downloaded to tablets and smartphones. This will show you where you are on the map and allow for plotting of routes. Glasgow edition 2 is already on a georeferenced base and can be downloaded via the Spokes web site.

New developments on the horizon include online Edinburgh maps and new editions printed on a tearproof and waterproof material. We are also working on a "future map" to be included with the forthcoming Edinburgh and Glasgow cycle maps. This will show a radical vision of what these cities could achieve for cyclists in the next decade - if the politicians are ambitious enough and want to have really cycle-friendly cities..

We will also be experimenting with including further information on the online maps as you zoom in, linking in with other campaigning efforts. For example, this might mean showing details of cycle parking at supermarkets or entertainment venues, or tracing recommended day rides with stopping points.

We try to keep the maps up to date and in print, but sometimes there are unavoidable delays as we work on new editions. We are working hard at the moment on the new printed editions of Edinburgh and Glasgow, but there may be a short gap before they appear when we run out of the current editions.

Comments on existing maps and ideas for new editions are always welcome - send them to Spokes initially.

---

## C. PLANNING

Much of what planning group does is reactive - commenting on planning applications, road schemes and Traffic Orders to try to ensure that conditions for cyclists are improved (and not worsened). For example, we scrutinised in detail at least 150 planning applications last year, objected or commented on perhaps 100, and visited over 20 PAN consultation exhibitions. Inevitably, given that Planning Group members are all from Edinburgh, the emphasis is on Edinburgh, but we cover other parts of the Lothians as far as possible.

We also comment on strategic plans such as Edinburgh council's Local Development Plan, SESPlan's revised regional structure plan and Scottish Government consultations on transport, planning and environmental issues, such as recently the Low Emissions Strategy.

We also provide Spokes representation on many consultative bodies. In Edinburgh alone these include the Transport Forum, the Local Access forum and the Cycle, Walking and Active Travel Forums. Membership of these forums has helped keep the council to its promises on increasing levels of spending on cycling and allows some examination of how this budget is spent. We also try to attend every meeting of the Transport Committee.

In addition to reactive work, Planning Group has campaigned on other issues including path and road design, the rules for road maintenance [a major success was getting a priority weighting given to roads important for cycling], bikes on trams [a UK first], bikes on trains and station parking [working with the spokes BikeRail representative], cycle hire, segregated cycle facilities, sharing space with pedestrians on offroad paths, and onroad interaction with vehicles. Unfortunately progress is often slow, but looking at trends of the years progress certainly happens, with Edinburgh well ahead of other Scottish cities on most (though not all) cycling issues and on levels of cycle use.

Much of the successes we do achieve are also due to other Spokes members (and others) writing in on these issues. Individual members giving their own personal angles on issues makes a big difference, as well as helping generate the climate in which politicians are more willing to allocate resources to cycling.

---

## D. RESOURCES

*Note:* People listed beside topics are the main contributors, but any/all group members may be involved sometimes.

### **Membership & databases** [Clair, Sarah, Judy, Mies, Dave]

- Spokes membership around 1200 individuals in 800 households, with around 20% annual turnover. Members are dropped at the end of the year if they haven't renewed in that or the previous year (after 3 or 4 opportunities). We have email address for 95% of households, and the database is kept pristine, with very few emails rejected.
- This year we offered renewal (if no data changes) by email – used by around 100 people. Clair is investigating online joining and renewal.
- The 'organisations' database (e.g. politicians, transport consultancies, health bodies,.) has over 2000 entries.

### **Spokes Bulletin & mailouts** [Dave]

- Feb, May and Oct issues, 12,500-13,000 copies of each. Target audiences: decision makers, spokes members, and cyclists in general.
- Mailout involves ~20 people stuffing nearly 3000 envelopes. Most are hand-delivered by ~40 volunteers. Resources Group does pre-stuffing & post-stuffing work, envelope labelling, responding to renewals, etc

### **Office** [Judy]

- General office management, sales, orders, donations.
- This year, major redecoration of the office, by volunteers.

### **Stalls** [Martyn]

- Over 20 stalls organised annually at community festivals, Farmers' Market, conferences, etc, all with considerable volunteer help.

### **Public Meetings** [Mies, Dave, Tim - posters]

- 2 or 3 public meetings a year, aiming for topical issues, to influence decision-makers, and with locally big speakers. Meetings on 'Lothians cycling development' and 'City Centre' each attracted over 130 people.

### **Online presence** [Dave, Rosie]

- [Dave] Website - articles on current issues, concentrating on issues/opportunities where readers can influence a decision. Also many pages of reference & background material, Spokes submissions, factsheets, etc.
- [Dave] Twitter – active presence, now with over 3600 followers, again highlighting opportunities, events etc as much as possible, to encourage participation/action by individuals
- [Dave] Member email circulars and Spokesworker, one or the other when useful, roughly monthly
- [Rosie] Incoming emails and website messages – around 10 per day average.

### **Traffic Count** [Barbara, Mies]

- Twice-yearly count of bikes and other traffic at 4 count points. Now 10<sup>th</sup> year, giving valuable trend data.

### **Competition** [all]

- Annual summer competition, usually on a useful, educational and/or humorous topic. Prizes obtained from various organisations (e.g. ScotRail, Filmhouse) and an external person identified to help in judging.

### **Projects** [all]

Projects depend largely on the interests/concerns/availability of current Resources Group members. New projects welcome *if* the person is willing to organise them!

- [especially Mies, Martyn] **Motorist awareness of cycling issues** - video & leaflet to stimulate discussion, particularly in driver training
- [especially Katherine, Iain, Marta] **Supermarkets** – new project on bike parking & access
- [especially Mies, Martyn] **Bike Breakfast** – annual bike breakfast outside the city chambers – attracting several 100 cyclists and many councillors
- [especially Judy, Mies] **Thank you for shopping by bike** – special event at Farmers Market in 2014, with goody bags obtained from stallholders for shoppers arriving by bike
- [Dave, individually rather within Resources] **Scottish cycling funding** – keeping a clear picture of this complex subject, summarising in Bulletins, preparing submissions to the annual budget process, annual survey of Scottish local authority cycling investment.

### **General comments**

- Resources Group meets as and when needed, ranging roughly from fortnightly to 4-weekly.
- We welcome new potential Resources Group members who can contribute enthusiasm, ideas and especially time. Generally Spokes can find volunteers to undertake specific one-off tasks like a delivery or helping at a stall; but more difficult is finding people to join Resources Group and help create/organise the opportunities for those one-off volunteers!

---

## **E. RIDES**

### **Overview**

The start point of the Usher Hall for all rides works very well. People know where to go. Meeting at 10:00am and departing at 10:15 means people have a chance for a pre-ride chat, and gives me time to count heads, and notify lunch time venue of final numbers if required.

There were 16 rides in 2014, none cancelled. So far, to mid May 2015, there have been three normal rides, one ride cancelled and one considerably shortened ride. Most rides have an escape route, enabling participants to get back home in relatively ease in the event of mechanical failure or emergency.

All rides are sociable, and the speed of the ride and occasional stops, enable the participants to interact without getting out of breath. It is all about enjoyment.

### **Routes**

Rides are always on cycle paths or quieter roads. The distance of 35 to 45 miles and moving speed of 10 to 12mph is very appropriate to the fitness of participants. In the winter, rides are generally below 40 miles, and in summer more than 40 miles, but rarely over 45 miles. Most rides have an escape route, enabling participants to get home if they have / want to, or feel the distance is too much.

Longer Summer Rides on the third Sunday of the month are between 50 to 60 miles. There were three last year. The Around the Forth was the most popular. Numbers are less than a normal Spokes Rides, but that is to be expected, but they are still very sociable.

### **Destinations**

In summer and good weather, we have a picnic lunch. On picnic days, participants sometimes like to visit a café / pub in the afternoon for coffee and cake.

In winter, pubs / cafés are used, and always pre-booked. I have found that as well as appreciating the advanced notice, as it enables the venue to plan staff numbers, but worth it. The venues are generally very appreciative of the business Spokes Rides bring, and are only too keen to help, especially if notified a few days before the ride.

### **Other Rides**

One special ride to Broughton in the Borders for a French person who had worked in Edinburgh for 18 months and was returning to France. She had been on several Spokes Ride. Very well attended by regular riders.

### **Participants**

Gender is very much 50/50. On a couple of rides last year, female participants outnumbered male participants.

Generally averaging around 10 participants per ride in winter, and 20 to 30 participants per ride in the summer. But numbers are very weather dependant. If the weather is 'bad', then approx. half the expected numbers turn up.

### **Bikes used on Spokes Rides**

Participants use all sorts of bikes, from town bikes to road bikes. Touring bikes are very popular at the moment. Fashion does dictate the type of bike. There are fewer mountain bikes than in the 1990s, but some people still prefer them. Use of road bikes has increased, and there is a tendency to make the rides faster, but careful guiding means the ride sticks to the 10 to 12mph average speed.

### **Issues**

Mechanical failures tend to be limited to punctures, but even these are far and few between.

Thankfully the First Aid kit remains unused. I check it every now and again to ensure all items remain in date.

I do get the very occasional complaint, but I am very understanding and deal with them appropriately, and in a timely fashion.

### **Communications**

There are 80 people on the email list, and 87 people in the Closed Facebook Group. There is also a Facebook page. Ride reports and details of the next ride are published via email, Facebook Group and at <http://snowcycle.co.uk/>.

If a ride is cancelled, people are notified through all four communication channels.

### **Shorter Rides**

Shorter (non-Spokes) rides are held by the 20 Milers, second Saturday of the month; CTC, third Sunday; and EasyCycle Short Ride, for very new riders, the last Sunday. These excellent rides fit in well with Spokes Rides.

---

## **F. TREASURER - report on 2014 accounts**

Spokes started the year in a healthy financial position with over £30,000 in the bank. During the year it made a very small deficit so the financial position remained healthy at the end of the year.

Income in the year was just under £23,000 and comprised mainly of members donations £13,000, map sales £8,000, and sale of advertising space in the bulletin of £2,000.

Expenditure in the year was just over £23,000 and comprised mainly of bulletin printing and postage £8,000, office costs £6,000, printing of maps £5,000. Other costs amounted to £4,000.

Spokes cashflow is quite variable. When new maps are produced and printed there is a large outlay. When those maps are sold over time money comes back in. It is estimated that Spokes needs to hold around £10,000 - £15,000 "spare" cash to cover these fluctuations. Cash is currently around £30,000.

---