

# Spokes competition 2015, Entry 30

## Daily Commute

**2. Who is it suitable for?** [it doesn't need to suit everyone] *circle all that apply...*

Families with young children / Experienced cyclists / Novice cyclists / Other – specify...

Experienced cyclists

**3. Where is the route located?** *circle all that apply ...*

Ed central / Ed north / Ed south / Ed east / Ed west / East Lothian / Midlothian / West Lothian

**4. Brief description of route**

a. Start point...My Home

b. End point (or circular)... My Work and back again

c. Brief description...

This is a ride from Saughtonhall (near Murrayfield ice rink) into the city centre. It is mainly in traffic.

**5. Any interesting / useful / beautiful features / facilities en route ...**

The ride passes some stunning architecture and features like Donaldson's School and Edinburgh Castle, but the truth is these barely register. The only pleasant feature that makes a real daily impression is Roseburn Park on my way into work. The greenness of the place, the changing trees and bushes over the fence and sometimes the sound of the river are a real morning boost. There are always dog walkers, usually children on the way to school and other cyclists are more visible on this part of the route – all good.

**6. Why is this a favourite route of yours? [This question is very important in the judging. You can just write one or two sentences or up to 300 words maximum].**

Despite it being mainly a route in traffic, and so much less rewarding than a ride in the country, it is often a highlight of the day and its the only cycling available most of the time.

And as my regular cycle it provides daily physical and mental health benefits without devoting any special time to “the gym”. It beats the bus, the only other viable option for the journey, on so many levels – slightly quicker, access to fresh air, saving hundreds of pounds a year and being close up to the liveliness of Edinburgh's streets and traffic(the good and the bad).

In many ways it could be seen as a dreary route after Roseburn Park. Up West Coates, Haymarket Terrace, West Maitland St, Torphichen and Morrison St, Bread St the Grassmarket and the Cowgate. In fact the route is packed full of interest. The traffic and the hazards are part of an unfolding sequence of change that the regularity exposes – will I encounter thoughtless drivers, helpful ones, a new configuration of barriers in Dewar Place, parking offenders on Morrison St, special events in the Grassmarket?

I vary the route on the way home and its a very similar picture although I think the events of the day mean I am a little less switched on then.

There is nothing fancy about my commuter ride but it really is special and I miss it greatly when really bad weather means it is not sensible.