

We have 3 main communications. Our flagship **Spokes Bulletin** is 3 times a year – printed, and on our website under the Bulletin tab. Our electronic-only **Action-Update** goes to all emailable members “roughly monthly,” when there are enough important developments, with stop-press news of forthcoming events, and road, traffic and planning matters. **Spokesworker** is now a very occasional document, basically a souped-up Action-Update, but on paper as well as online. It is usually produced for occasions when paper is useful – for example at public meetings. Action-Updates and Spokesworkers both also appear on our website under the Spokesworker tab.

To keep in touch with events, developments and opportunities, be a Spokes member and make sure we have your email address.

TRAMLINE EXTENSION

Proposals to extend Edinburgh tram to Newhaven and Leith are out for consultation, until 29 April. Spokes Planning Group has not yet studied the entire route plan but we are genuinely shocked at the proposals for Leith Walk between Pilrig and Foot of the Walk.

Cycling and walking will be deterred rather than encouraged.

People on bikes travelling on the Council's planned west-east 'flagship' route from Roseburn, through the city centre, will reach Pilrig on segregated or very quiet routes – but then enter an onroad cycle lane with parking and loading spaces painted across it!

People on foot will have a narrower footway, and instead of being able to cross two Leith Walk traffic lanes, relatively easily like now, they will be faced with four lanes and a wide central wasted space covered in so-called 'pedestrian deterrent' paving.

Not only will cycling and walking conditions be significantly worse than now, but, based on experience of the existing tramline, they will be **positively dangerous for cycling** - see below.

PILRIG TO FOOT OF WALK: OUR VIEW

Not long ago, with Sustrans 50/50 cash, this stretch was hugely improved, traffic lanes cut to two (one each direction) with wide footways & wide onroad cycle lanes (though we had wanted segregated). It is now far nicer to visit, cross the road, shop locally, etc. It was expected that if the tram was built the layout would be largely unchanged, though with segregated bike lanes (inside parked cars) - see [Sustrans statement](#) in [Find Out More](#) below.



A Dutch shopping street of similar width to this section of Leith Walk, showing the sort of solution possible, though ideally with greenery and footway extensions replacing some parking bays! [pic via Sara Dorman]

Edinburgh's proposals double the traffic lanes from 2 to 4, with walking and cycling squeezed intolerably to allow this. Ironically, Glasgow's Sauchiehall Street is currently being rebuilt with traffic lanes cut from 4 to 2, whilst Edinburgh does the opposite here!

The **inner traffic lane** will be used in *peak hours* for bus/tram and *offpeak* for all traffic. The **outer traffic lane**, with painted cycle lane, will be used in *peak hours* for general traffic (no peak loading/parking) and *offpeak* for parking and loading. So *offpeak* you'll have to cycle round parked cars and lorries, right next to the tramlines - a **sure recipe for crashes**, especially when parked vehicles inadvertently move out at the wrong moment. Even experienced cyclists will be at serious risk of tramline crashes.

We support the Sustrans position that there should be only the two existing traffic lanes. If necessary, cars could be banned during the peak period (or 24/7) to give tram and bus priority. After all, cars were banned totally in Shandwick Place in the first

tram project. And the bottom section of Leith Walk is to be closed northbound for *1.5 years* during construction, so drivers will be fully accustomed to a different route or mode.

Finally, the central reservation should be removed. The official argument that central poles have already been bought is a minor issue compared to the permanent impact on walking and cycling. Poles could be installed on build-outs between car bays, or on the footway edge and/or cables could be hung from buildings.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING??

The Council, unbelievably, seems to be using the same approach as in the first tramline – design the tram layout first, then try to fit in everything else – unlike the holistic design used in Europe where all modes are considered from the very outset.

It is hard to believe that this lesson has not been learned, when 250 people have attended A&E with tramline-related cycle crash injuries, and over 150 legal cases are pending – rising by roughly one a month. Indeed, the excess on the Council's tram insurance policy is being hiked from £10K to £100k per claim because of potential cyclist injury costs [[Herald 26.3.18](#)].

The Council has at least said firmly and repeatedly that this consultation is 'genuine' and that they are prepared to change the plans, depending on feedback – so please do respond!!

OTHER LOCATIONS/ISSUES

We haven't yet studied the plans in any detail other than the section above, and we particularly need your ideas, but a few initial points are below. **The plans** can be found in *Key Documents - TRO* on the [TramsToNewhaven website](#) [See [Find Out More](#) below].

- ♦ **Generally** – feels as if cycling is an afterthought; not enough alternatives or dedicated space, some particularly unsuitable for novice, nervous or child cyclists, and much shared with walkers
- ♦ **Tram stops** – staggered platforms could give more cycle space
- ♦ **Constitution Street** – no cycle facilities; bikes banned at south end (tram stop). Alternative using Newkirkgate should be installed. Proposed partial alternative via Laurie/Academy St is a detour and dangerous to reach from Leith Walk (northbound).
- ♦ **Foot of Walk** – Difficult turns, especially crossing tramlines
- ♦ **Ocean Drive** – No cycle alternative shown
- ♦ **North Edinburgh Network** – need good Ocean Terminal link
- ♦ **All Leith Walk** – Many banned right turns in/out of Leith Walk, so almost impossible to cycle across – bike exemptions needed.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ♦ **Attend the public drop-ins**, speak to officers, leave comments.
 - Tue 3 April: McDonald Road Library, 10am - 4pm
 - Thu 12: Leith Community Ed Centre, 12A Newkirkgate, 3-9pm
 - Sat 21 April: Ocean Terminal, 12 noon - 5pm.
- ♦ **Complete the online survey** (see consultn website, below).
- ♦ **Send Spokes your views** and any issues you think we should be aware of, particularly for the areas beyond Foot of the Walk.
- ♦ **If you feel strongly**, speak to your councillors - find them at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/councillors.

FIND OUT MORE

1. **Trams to Newhaven website** [click its 'consultation' tab] www.edinburgh.gov.uk/tramstonewhaven
2. **Spokes page of useful documents** [includes Sustrans views] spokes.org.uk : documents : public transport : tramline extension.

PLEASE ACT!!

In addition to the tramline consultation overleaf there are several other vital consultations ongoing or coming soon. **Please make every effort to respond - there is significant opposition to some of these plans, and supportive comments can be really helpful.**

EXISTING TRAMLINE *[consultn ends 11 April]*

The Council has a phased programme of safety measures [[1.10.17 article at spokes.org.uk](#)] and is now consulting on phase 3. We support all the measures *except* at Haymarket we support Option 2 but not Option 1, which still leaves cyclists at risk of being hit by vehicles entering Grosvenor Street. Find the consultation at... [consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk](#) [Tram Route Cycle Safety].

A8 Glasgow Road 40MPH LIMIT *[ends 17 April]*

The Council is proposing a 40mph limit between South Gyle and Newbridge, for general safety reasons and also to introduce a new pedestrian/cycle crossing. There is opposition, so support is important. If you agree, email trafficorders@edinburgh.gov.uk, saying you support the 40mph limit in "TRO/17/90, A8 Glasgow Road". You **must** include your name and postal address. Full details - see TRO/17/90 at [edinburgh.gov.uk/trafficorders](#).

WEST-EAST CYCLEROUTE (CCWEL)

Consultation on legal Orders for phase 1, Roseburn-Haymarket, begins soon. **There will be opposition because of loss of parking spaces so support is vital.** You may have minor disagreements to raise but we hope you'll give strong overall support.

Details are not yet online, but 2 drop-ins are arranged...

April 17, 1-7pm, 6 Murrayfield Place (was Bloemen Ecke office)

April 19, 1-7pm, Apex Hotel, Haymarket Terrace.

GEORGE ST & FIRST NEW TOWN

A drop-in is expected in April, which should give outline ideas for the future of George Street (and surrounding streets) - it is vital this includes a qualityycleroute as part of CCWEL. We expect details to appear at [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/firstnewtown](#).

EdFoC.org.uk & SPOKES

Spokes is again a sponsor of the excellent [Edinburgh Festival of Cycling](#), and additionally we are putting on 4 EdFoC events! More details to follow, but *put the dates in your diary...*

June 11, 7pm **Talk/videos/discussion - 40 Years of Spokes**

June 12, 6.15pm **Infrastructure Ride - the good & the bad**

June 13, 7.45-9.15 **Spokes Bike Breakfast**

June 13, 7.30 (doors open 6.45) **Spokes Summer Public Meeting ... Edinburgh City Transformation.** This promises to be a great meeting, with speakers including...

◆ **Daisy Narayanan** Leader of the [City Transformation Project](#), and Deputy Director of Sustrans Scotland [Twitter](#)

◆ **Prof David Begg** chair of [Glasgow Connectivity Commission](#) and former Edinburgh City Transport Convener [[Spokes 130, p6](#)]

APRIL SPOKES STALLS

Stalls are vital for Spokes, bringing our presence to community festivals and many other events. Please go along to say hello - and buy Spokes maps at stall rates. To volunteer to help, contact mknottenbelt1@gmail.com. Expected stalls, if enough helpers...

Apr 7, 11-4 [Science Festival, Future Transport exhibition](#) ECCI, High School Yards EH1 1LZ.

Apr 8, 12-5 [Out of the Blue, Cycle Fair](#) Dalmeny Street

Apr 14, 11-4 Midlothian Green Party fair, Penicuik Town Hall

Apr 20/21, 9-1 Commonwealth Pool cycling event

Apr 21, 9-2 Farmers' Market, Castle Terrace

April 28 **Pedal on Parliament** 2018, 11-2. Quite apart from our stall, do come to this essential annual event asking politicians of all parties to sign up to the PoP manifesto, including 10% of transport budgets for active travel. Full details at [pedalonparliament.org](#).

SHOPS PROJECT

Is bike parking or access poor at your local shops/supermarket? We'd love more feedback from our Shops Project leaflet - printed copies available, also printed in Spokes Bulletin 130 and online at [spokes.org.uk : documents : spokes projects : supermarkets](#). Please email ideas/queries to: shopsproject@spokes.org.uk.

SPOKES STRUCTURE

People often ask if Spokes is a charity and if they can donate by Gift Aid - and are surprised to find that we're not. As well as the tax advantages, this would limit member liability. A general meeting a couple of years ago approved us investigating this. We've taken advice, and reckon that the best approach to fit with how we have successfully operated for many years is to become a single-tier SCIO [Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation].

What would this mean to you as a Spokes supporter? You'd notice little difference. You'd still have the same opportunities to contribute to our work and get involved in a working group or project; we'd run the same events and do everything we currently do. Some differences you'd see are that we'd have a charity number on letters and emails, you'd be able to Gift Aid donations, we'd do some formal annual reporting to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and you would officially be called a 'supporter.'

We want the transition to a single-tier SCIO to be open and transparent - we will keep you in touch with further significant developments and the change will have to be approved by a meeting notified to and open to all members before it can happen.

The next step is to re-write the wording of our objectives so that they meet the charity test. The proposed new wording is below. It is basically exactly what we do now, but re-worded to meet the charity criteria. The objectives define what 'Spokes the charity' would do, so they are a really important part of setting it up.

The proposed reworded Spokes objectives are:

- ◆ Advancement of citizenship and community development by supporting and encouraging people to engage with local and national government and politicians to make effective provision for cyclists in Edinburgh, the Lothians and elsewhere.
- ◆ Advancement of public participation in utility and recreational cycling in Edinburgh, the Lothians and elsewhere.
- ◆ Advancement of education by carrying out research and providing information about utility and recreational cycling, and its relationship to wider transport and environmental issues, in Edinburgh, the Lothians and elsewhere.

Note that the words *and elsewhere* don't mean we plan to expand but are because we often participate in national events and issues which may affect what happens locally - for example national PoP and Sustrans activities and relevant government consultations.

If you have queries or comments on the above, do get in touch.

PATHS DISRUPTION

North Ed Network - closures for drainage, surfacing, etc, due to end June 8. Diversions, some of which will be onroad, should be signed at all closures. A particularly difficult one, between the A8 and Ravelston Dykes, is due for 2 weeks, starting 9 April [but the path should be open before 9.30am and after 4pm each day]. Contact for further info: Paul.Matthews@aecom.com.

Water of Leith path - Currie, Riccarton Mains Rd to Cherry Tree - closure until April 6, but open 30/3-2/4 over Easter. A late decision, due to end-of-year cash, to resurface a 1km stretch with trial 'Ultitrec' surfacing - apparently looshish at first but becoming harder. *Contact:* martin.duncan@edinburgh.gov.uk, Access Officer.

Midlothian - the NCN196 railway path at **Auchendinny** is closed indefinitely due to a crash damaging a bridge which is now unsafe. twitter.com/SpokesLothian/status/975849271353278464

USEFUL INFO SOURCES [includes some of the above]

Sustrans Scotland publishes details of NCN disruptions here... www.sustrans.org.uk/scotland/national-cycle-network/closures-and-diversions

Edinburgh Council lists road and major path disruptions here... edinburgh.cdmf.info/public/disruptions/list.htm