

SPOKES *The Lothian Cycle Campaign*

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SPOKES response, from a cyclists perspective, to a February 2019 ScotRail Consultation on *The Customer Journey and Making it Better*

In general, Spokes gets strong feedback about the wish for *certainty*, particularly for long journeys with less frequent services; whereas for local journeys, the wish is for *predictability, capacity and convenience*.

Not all cyclists journeys are of the same type and there are differences between the customer journey experience for:

- "tourists" on long-distance rail routes
- "leisure" cyclists on off-peak local
- "utility/commuter" cyclists in suburban areas who wish to take their bike on the train with them
- "utility/commuter" cyclists who wish to park their bike at the station.

We have set out our comments below on issues effecting the overall journey experience from a cyclists perspective and would be very happy to discuss these further at any time. Some are big picture issues following the themes of certainty and predictability and some are smaller detailed points,

1. Whilst recognising the competing demands for space on ScotRail trains, we feel that overall better use could be made of the space available, addressing the different peak and off-peak demands, by increasing the use of "flexible use" areas. This is a consistent theme by Spokes and is more than a cyclists' special-pleading issue. Our worksheet on this subject is [here](#). (This dates from 2015, but the principles are just as relevant today). Cycle carriage has often been seen a choice between passengers seat numbers and bike space and, historically, ScotRail trains have been filled to capacity with fixed inflexible seating that fails to recognise different peak and off-peak usage patterns.
2. An improved bike reservations systems. We currently give credit to ScotRail which, unlike some other Train Operating Companies, now has the facility on its website of bike reservations when buying tickets on-line. Looking forward, however, this is a complex area requiring a major review and consultation.
3. Increased bike storage at key stations. We are pleased that ScotRail has recently made significant improvements to the quality and quantity of bike parking facilities at its stations. In some cases, there are growing capacity pressures to address, such as at Haymarket.
4. Ability to buy tickets at all station entrances - eg Waverley needs ScotRail ticket vending machines at each of the Market Street, Waverley Steps and Calton Road entrances, so as not to have to walk a long way past ones train platform just to buy a ticket.
5. Kiosks on station forecourts are easily accessed when *en-route* to your train with a bike, but enclosed shops (eg Marks & Spencer at both Haymarket and Waverley) are harder to use, but could more easily be accessed *en-route* if "short term only" bike locking stands/rings were available at their entrances.
6. As the complete journey begins and ends away from stations, so direct and safe cycle links to surrounding areas are of key importance, but are often not present because these are away from railway land and funding is complicated. Our view is that this is primarily a *Transport Scotland* funding responsibility although ScotRail has an important promotional role to play.
7. Clearer/larger bike zone marking, especially on the outside of trains. Also within trains, to discourage them filling up with luggage/prams - but these have to go somewhere - see point 1 above.
8. More consistency about bike zone location and quantity on trains of the same class, preferably by

increasing to the current maximum, rather than by reduction! For instance some retained CI 170s (the former Inter City ones with First Class compartments) have 2 bike zones, whilst those used on local services currently have just one.) It would be good to see this standardised to, at least, the higher number. There are similar issues with the different versions of CI 158

9. For on-train bike storage, there is much dislike of the use of hanging arrangements, revolving around important issues of equality of access.
10. With the introduction of the new electric train fleets, with their longer bike zones, there is now a good case for implementing a consultation about removing or easing the tandem ban.
11. It would be good for clarity about the rules permitting bike carriage in door vestibules of electric trains, already permitted on the CI380s on the North Berwick route and on "Strathclyde" electrics - now that these train types are being used more widely, with new train types now also used on the North Berwick route and with many/most "Strathclyde" electrics having been refurbished to now include a bike-zone.

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