

# Spokes Action-Update 11 Jan 2020

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## 1. Cycling into 2020

There's an article about prospects for cycling development in Edinburgh, Scotland and the UK in 2020 (and beyond) on our website here....

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/2020/01/cycling-into-2020/>

We have also tweeted the article – retweets welcome!

<https://twitter.com/SpokesLothian/status/1214501137828794368>

## 2. City Mobility Plan

Edinburgh City Council has published its draft City Mobility Plan (formerly the Local Transport Strategy). This gives a wide perspective on transport across the city over the next 10 years, building on the [City Centre Transformation](#) plans for the centre. Amongst other things, the Plan promises (*italics are quotes*) ...

- *By 2022 ... the current generation of major active travel schemes will be delivered* - presumably this is CCWEL West-East route, MGS Meadows to George Street, West EdinburghLink, Leith Walk (and segregated route to the Bioquarter?)
- *By 2025, a detailed plan to reallocate road space on all arterial routes to deliver improved public transport and dedicated active travel infrastructure. By 2030 Arterial routes will be used for mass commuting by bike*
- By 2030, tram to be extended to the Bioquarter and to Granton
- Overall the plan looks great, but there are some aspects which could be improved – for example rather than converting commuter parking to residential spaces, which will encourage higher car ownership and use, the space freed up should be used to enhance and green the city streets.

The draft Plan will be publicly consulted on, with drop-ins etc, for several weeks from early Feb.

The draft Plan is appendix 1 in this Jan 16 Transport & Environment Committee paper...

<https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/documents/s12642/City%20Mobility%20Plan.pdf>

You can watch the Committee meeting from the public gallery or on the Council webcast, starting 10am.

[https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast\\_interactive/465074](https://edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/465074)

## 3. Edinburgh Climate Emergency – consultation - **ends 29 Feb**

Having declared a Climate Emergency, Edinburgh City Council "*is embarking on a city-wide programme including a city Climate Commission to support and encourage public, private and third sector partners to take action.*" The Council is seeking feedback from as many citizens as possible. Please complete the 15-minute survey [here](#). For further information, or to submit more detailed ideas, email [strategyandinsight@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:strategyandinsight@edinburgh.gov.uk).

## 4. Spokes Maps - **Adobe Illustrator volunteer(s) needed**

We are working on a complete revision of the Spokes Midlothian map, which we hope will be out this Spring. Surveying is well underway, but more help is needed with computer mapping. In particular, volunteers with Adobe Illustrator experience to help some of the drafting. We have an expert who is doing the main mapping work, but he needs help as there is a lot for one person. Contact [spokes@spokes.org.uk](mailto:spokes@spokes.org.uk)

## 5. Bike storage containers and small sheds in front gardens – *by 28 January*

Many people, for example living in terraces and tenements, have nowhere to store a bike unless they install a container or small shed in their front garden. At present this needs planning permission and a fee of over £200, whether or not permission is granted. If you don't apply and you get reported by a neighbour, there is considerable hassle and time-wasting for you and for council officers. Spokes has fought for years for a change in government rules, so that such containers or sheds under a certain size are granted "permitted development rights" (PDR) which means they would not need planning permission.

**We have helped many individuals fight the system, merely so that their family can own and use bikes, but what is needed is the above change in government PDR rules.** We have worked with the Council to ease the system as far as possible for local residents, and have produced a factsheet approved by the Council, but they are bound by the government rules, so planning permission and £200+ fee are still needed.

If you want to know more about our long and highly frustrating campaign against government bureaucracy, to achieve this small step towards wider bike ownership and use see here...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/documents/advice/bike-storage-gardens/>

**Now the government is consulting on changing PDR rules (for many purposes). However, so far it looks like this particular rule will not be changed without more pressure. Please help us by responding to the consultation, especially if you have been affected or if you might need a small shed/container in future.**

The consultation is based on a very long report (779 pages) but you don't need to read it unless you really want to! Spokes has made a very full response, wider than the online survey. It is not necessary to read our response either, but if you wish to, it is here...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/1912-ScotGov-PDR-review-Spokes-response.pdf>.

**The government consultation is here. Please respond if this issue concerns you...**

<https://consult.gov.scot/local-government-and-communities/reviewing-and-extending-pdr/>

**We suggest you answer the questions as follows (feel free to adapt to your own words). It is fine to leave other questions blank if you wish.**

Q1 Allowing containers and small sheds in front gardens is essential to allow householders to own and use bikes, but the need for planning permission and a heavy fee puts many people off. Given the climate emergency the government should be doing all it can to encourage use of bikes. This is an *active travel issue* and should be treated as such in the report, not relegated to the 'householder' section of the report.

Q2a The report fails to discuss the position of householders and families who need bike storage but only have a front garden, not a back one – for example, many people who live in terraces or tenements.

Q3a In relation to small sheds and containers the report looks only at visual issues and completely omits consideration of climate, transport or public health, despite government promises that the climate emergency will be considered in all its policies. Therefore the report's predicted effects of allowing PDR for containers or small sheds are grossly limited and totally inadequate.

Q4 The report should recommend PDR for containers and small sheds in front gardens, without which many families cannot own or store bikes, and so have to use motor transport.

Q5 *If you have any personal experiences, or might need a shed/container in future, use this question to say how you are or were affected.*

**Thank you for helping our campaign by responding to the government consultation!! If you wish to also take this further, please also email your MSPs and draw their attention to the consultation and to the Spokes submission.**

## **6. Sheriffhall roundabout – *protest Monday 13 Jan, 11am, outside Scottish Parliament***

As part of the Edinburgh City Region Deal, the Scottish Government is providing £120m to rebuild Sheriffhall roundabout as a flyover. The original plans were dreadful for walking and cycling but thanks to [massive Spokes efforts](#) (including appearing at the Scottish Parliament) the plans now include high-quality cycle/pedestrian crossings. A major problem still remains, however, as the Scottish Government is unwilling to include cycleroutes between the roundabout and important destinations, such as the Bioquarter and Midlothian towns – we call the scheme an oasis of cycling excellence in a desert of underprovision.

However, with the recently declared Climate Emergency, there are now growing calls for the £120m to be used for sustainable and active travel rather than to facilitate easier motor travel and thereby increase traffic levels (as has recently happened with the new Forth Bridge, which was intended – supposedly – not to increase traffic levels, but where traffic growth is happening).

Spokes members Cllr Claire Miller and Alison Johnstone MSP are organising a Green Party protest outside the Scottish Parliament this Monday 13 Jan at 11am. Spokes is not party-political but we support the aims of this campaign, and certainly a number of individual Spokes members will be going along – you are of course welcome to be there too.

The campaign is fully aware that the current plans include high quality cycle facilities, and will call for high quality active travel crossings (*and* routes linking Midlothian, the Bioquarter and other destinations) to be provided even if the motor flyover is scrapped - costing only a fraction of the £120m.

## **7. Leith Walk/ Halmyre Street site – *ends 31 Jan***

The Council is consulting on the future of a large site between Leith Walk and Halmyre Street. We have not yet finalised Spokes comments, but a member of our planning group says...

“I think it provides an excellent opportunity for a long-distance east-west cycle route and potential for a north-south one, both avoiding awkward busy or tramlined streets.

The east-west cycle link could enter the site at the south-west corner, opposite Stead's Place, giving a rare opportunity for a 90-degree cycle crossing of the tram lines. It could leave the other side of the site at Thorntree Street, which joins Easter Road opposite the start of the Easter Road-Seafield path. That would make a quiet link all the way between Pilrig Park and Restalrig.

The north-south route is outside the site, but it is worth pursuing for several reasons. It would use Halmyre Street and its southern continuation Dickson Street, which run parallel to Easter Road and are partly closed to motor traffic. It could be extended southwards via Elliot Place to the Powderhall line (assuming that goes ahead) and across it to Brunswick Road and Calton; and possibly northwards across Duke Street to Leith Links where existing paths lead towards the dockland developments. That could provide an alternative to Constitution Street avoiding both the junctions at the ends of Duke Street.”

The online consultation is here...

[https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/leith\\_walk\\_halmyre\\_street/](https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/leith_walk_halmyre_street/)

There are also staffed drop-ins

- Mon 13 Jan, 2-7pm, McDonald Rd library
- Wed 15 Jan, 3-7pm, Leith Community Centre, New Kirkgate
- Wed 22 Jan, 1-5pm, Out of the Blue, Dalmeny St.

## **8. Portobello & Craigmillar Neighbourhood Network**

... seeking ideas to improve the local environment ... they will be holding pop ups at ...

- Craigmillar Library, 28 Jan, from 1 to 3
- Magdalene Community Centre, 30 Jan, from 4.30 to 6.30.

Further information - [mary.campbell@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:mary.campbell@edinburgh.gov.uk) [councillor]

## 9. East Lothian – Jan 16

The next East Lothian Council Cycle Forum will be on 16 January, 2pm at the Town House, Haddington. All local members are welcome to attend (you can just turn up). Any East Lothian cycling issue can be raised.

Further information, agenda, etc, from [ireid@eastlothian.gov.uk](mailto:ireid@eastlothian.gov.uk) 01620 827143

## 10. Pentland Hills Regional Park, Strategic Plan 2019-28 – ends 31 Jan

Edinburgh Council is consulting on a final draft of the plan. Spokes has not as yet looked at this but we welcome any comments from members.

Please also submit your comments on Edinburgh Council consultation site, HERE...

<https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk/sfc/pentland-hills-plan/>

## 11. Other consultations – Check council, government & some other consultations here

- ◆ Edinburgh [consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk](https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk)
- ◆ Edinburgh [Edinburgh traffic orders](#)
- ◆ East Lothian [www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk](http://www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk)
- ◆ Midlothian [www.midlothian.gov.uk/consultation/open](http://www.midlothian.gov.uk/consultation/open)
- ◆ West Lothian [www.westlothian.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.westlothian.gov.uk/consultations)
- ◆ Scottish Govt [consult.gov.scot](http://consult.gov.scot)
- ◆ Transport Scotland [www.transport.gov.scot/consultations](http://www.transport.gov.scot/consultations)
- ◆ Just in case... Transform Scotland keeps an updated page of current transport-related consultations... [transformscotland.org.uk/whats-new/action-alerts](http://transformscotland.org.uk/whats-new/action-alerts) Check it out in case there's anything important that doesn't appear in the website addresses above (there often is!)

## 12. Keeping in touch

- ★ Remember to check out our **website** every so often [www.spokes.org.uk](http://www.spokes.org.uk)
- ★ We are active on **Twitter** [@SpokesLothian](#). Follow us and ReTweet tweets that you support. Recent tweets also appear on our website in the right-hand column.
- ★ If you use **Facebook**, please like, share, etc the [Spokes Facebook page](#).
- ★ To campaign effectively Spokes needs as many supporters as possible. If you are not already a member, you like what we do, and you'd like to keep in touch with developments, please join Spokes. For details of membership and how to join, go to [www.spokes.org.uk/membership](http://www.spokes.org.uk/membership).