

SPOKES ONLINE MEETING VIA ZOOM, 7.30PM 19 May 2020

AGENDA ITEM 1

Spokes Map Distribution

The current map distribution system depends heavily on a few individuals doing a lot and coverage seems to be patchy. The aim of the meeting is to agree ways to share the load, establish systems to support this, and to increase our opportunities for map sales.

As Dave DF says: 'We really need a basic routine system which ensures that the most important shop and online outlets are well stocked.'

Below are some suggestions which have been made by the group in recent emails for consideration.

Volunteers contacting and distributing to bike shops

Currently: we find out from emails (from the shops or from people unable to buy maps?), volunteers visiting bike shops and chance meetings with bike shop owners, that shops have run out of maps. Peter then delivers the maps. Is there an intermediate step where someone (Peter?) contacts the shop to confirm the order? How is payment made?

Suggestion: we need a system/coordinator so that as many shops as possible are contacted regularly (say every 3 or 4 months) - we don't seem to be short of volunteers to do contacting for a good number of shops, only someone to coordinate - e.g. remind the volunteers when necessary and do an occasional report for maps group, maybe twice a year.

Gradually build up a small number of local 'agents' - members who would check the shops nearest to them, say every 3 or 4 months. We have had an offer to do this from Spokes member Barbara Darcy for the Tollcross area shops, including Bike Coop. Davie (in maps group) also offered some months ago to do a few shops. These local volunteers could also deliver maps to the shops, or report to Peter to do the delivery.

A 'distribution coordinator' in maps group. Their job would be, at defined times, say every 3 or 4 months (e.g. at start of Nov, Feb, May, Aug) to:

- liaise with the above local agent(s) to ensure the local visits are made and how many maps taken by which shops.
- pass the order on to whoever is going to collect and deliver the maps
- do a brief report/spreadsheet on what maps shops have taken, and circulate round maps group

Robert Simpson is willing to co-ordinate the map top-up scheme and suggests doing it three times a year to coincide with the newsletter.

List of Bike Shops - As part of this activity we could set up the definitive list of bike shops in Edinburgh, Midlothian, East Lothian and West Lothian. Martin McDonnell has already started a list on Excel.

NOTE: Some shops, like Bike Coop, order centrally and then distribute the maps to their shops. Any system will need to accommodate different ordering procedures.

Automatic reminder system - We could set up an online ordering system to automatically remind and encourage outlets to re-order. But should not neglect the personal touch – should still go in person to shops to help build up strong links.

Online sales

SPOKES website – could map sales information be made more prominent?

The main online stockist, Sustrans is currently out of stock of all but the West Lothian map. The Bike Coop who sold our maps online as well as instore, no longer lists them. How and when do we check with these and any other online distributors to see if they need/want more maps?

Employer and workplace opportunities

If the distribution coordinator had time many other initiatives could be taken forward (e.g. good employer opportunities, given the sale of 70 maps to RBS a while ago and 30 or so to an Ed Uni department). Other outlets – educational, local authorities? Other?

Point of Sale

In bike shops and other outlets - display racks, posters, leaflets?

Use of distributors to book shops?

Have used in the past. Cost could be around 15-20% of sales.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Update on the status of the Midlothian map. Next steps. (AF)

AGENDA ITEM 3

A short advance item on the next Edinburgh map. (DdF)