

Spokes Action-Update 9 August 2020

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1. OnStreet Bike Storage

Roughly 10 years after Edinburgh Council decided to go ahead with secure onstreet bike storage, the permanent units are now being installed! This photo c/o Spokes Party.

- ◆ The scheme is run by CycleHoop who have a great deal of experience in London. They spoke and answered many questions at our [public meeting](#) last year.

- ◆ Cost of a space is £72 a year, plus £25 refundable key deposit. This feels costly, especially compared to car permits, and we'd like it reduced. London experience suggests people abandon bikes if it is too cheap - though CycleHoop we presume will monitor for abandoned bikes as part of the scheme management.

- ◆ Much of the long history is here..

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/residential-bike-storage/>



RESERVING A SPACE

You can now reserve a space. Go to cyclehoop.rentals, type in your postcode, specify your preferred hanger, and register your interest.

We don't know how reservations work. One would assume first come first served, though *from memory* we were told that people who registered previously with the Council would be at the top of the queue. **In any case, spaces are likely to be in high demand, so reserve one now if you really need one.**

GETTING MORE HANGERS

On the Cyclehoop website you can also say where you would like new bike hangers located – there are likely to be future installation phases, based largely on feedback.



RENT A CYCLE PARKING SPACE HERE

To apply for a space or find out more visit: www.cyclehoop.rentals

cyclehoop

rentals@cyclehoop.com

02086991338

[@cyclehoop](https://twitter.com/cyclehoop)



2. Spaces for People (SfP) - Covid Streets Schemes

Almost every Council in Scotland has applied to the [government/Sustrans scheme](#) to fund measures to improve social distancing and make conditions safer to encourage walking and cycling. Although called 'temporary' the Scottish Government and many councils (certainly Edinburgh) hope they will eventually be made permanent – with modifications based on experience. Pedal on Parliament has done a report on what is happening across Scotland: pedalonparliament.org/space-for-distancing-making-it-stick.

It is truly incredible how Edinburgh Council has changed from interminable delays and multiple consultations on active travel projects and is now suddenly implementing physical changes in vastly shorter timescales – indeed the first road closures came only days after the Scottish Government changed the [Traffic Order regulations](#) to make this possible. There are important lessons from this for future 'permanent' schemes ... see our [website article](#).

If you wish to influence what is happening in your area the best option now is through your local councillors. Most councils have now completed their formal consultations and funding bidding is closed [Edinburgh has won £5m, second highest in Scotland for SfP schemes]. Find councillors at your council website or at www.writetothem.com. One Council in our area still running a formal consultation on SfP schemes is East Lothian – see below.

Here is what is happening locally...

EDINBURGH

A whole series of measures is being introduced, in the categories below. Note that there is a UK shortage of materials for such experimental/ low cost measures, so **many of Edinburgh's are being installed using very basic materials such as cones which will be replaced once they can buy better 'temporary' materials.**



Old Dalkeith Road photo by @EdinNightRide [twitter]

- ◆ **Segregated cycle lanes** – early ones were Old Dalkeith Road, Crewe Road South, The Mound. Coming soon – Craigmillar Park, Comiston Road, Gilmerton Road, Melville Drive, Ferry Road, Duddingston Road, Dundee Street and more...
- ◆ **Town Centres** – mainly footway widenings. Whilst we strongly support this, we are concerned that not all are being installed with as much thought for cycling as we feel is needed. We have [emailed the Council](#) about this. **If you have come across places which you feel have been made more dangerous, please tell your councillors and ask them to raise this.** At present some of the schemes are being seriously undermined by brazenly antisocial car parking, such as [here](#) on George IV Bridge – councillors need to be pushed about this.

The design of schemes is not always clear at first as the rapid-consultation maps are often sketchy, and as implementation is done in stages rather than overnight – for example some schemes promise “lines” to demarcate space for cycling, but these lines have not appeared at the same time as the cones used to mark out pedestrian space. A further complication is that the Council promises 'Phase 2' town centre measures, in which cycle facilities will feature more strongly – for example some of the Phase 1 “lined” cycle space is likely to become segregated.

- ◆ **School schemes** – to make the streets around schools safer. Some of these are fairly significant, incorporating road closures.
- ◆ **Assorted** – other schemes with a mixture of aims – for example, Arboretum Place.

Details of nearly all the schemes so far, together with Spokes responses, are on our website here...

www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/edinburgh-covid-schemes/

A huge amount of work is involved for our Planning Group and local groups – thanks to all volunteers!

EAST LOTHIAN

See www.eastlothian.gov.uk/spacesforpeople. The Council's original proposals would have moved a fair bit of roadside parking in urban areas to widen footways and provide more space for cycling. Unfortunately after strong feedback from some local businesses the proposals have been revised, with most parking retained, albeit there remain other valuable schemes.

Your opportunity to comment...

The Council is slower at implementation than Edinburgh, partly because it is undertaking ongoing wide consultation rather than Edinburgh's approach of mini-consultation followed by rapid "try then modify." Indeed **there is now a map-based consultation** on the current set of proposals. The consultation is a little hard to find from the above website, but you can go direct [here](#). You will now see 4 white dots on the very left. Click the bottom dot (called 'your opinion' when you hover over it). You can now see the map of proposals – zoom in, then click on each scheme in turn and you will find a space to leave comments.

MIDLOTHIAN

See www.midlothian.gov.uk/info/200296/coronavirus/660/spaces_for_people. Unfortunately, as with East Lothian, the Council withdrew many of its town centre proposals which would have restricted kerbside parking. Other schemes remain but the overall picture sadly does not seem very ambitious.

Spokes Dalkeith has been in touch with the Council and intends to work with local Community Councils to identify other low cost measures which could be introduced fairly rapidly. For more info or to help, email spokesdalkeith@gmail.com.

WEST LOTHIAN

See www.westlothian.gov.uk/article/63938/Changes-to-traffic-signals-as-Spaces-for-People-work-gets-underway.

This 23 June [Committee report](#) also covers *permanent* projects to be funded by other sources including the government CWSS cash (Cycling Walking Safer Streets)

As far as we know, the Council has not withdrawn any of its covid streets plans – although there were fewer proposed parking restrictions than in the other councils.

3. Picardy Place & Leith Street

3.1 Omni to Calton Road cycleroute

It has taken the Scottish Government *literally almost 2 years cogitation*, but they have now approved, with no changes, the Council's RSO Traffic Order which formalises the current Leith Street layout. This means that the Council can at last open this existing cycleroute, which until now has been barriered off. This is expected to happen **Monday 10 August**. We are pretty unhappy with aspects of the design, for example at the Greenside Row crossing, and [had objected](#) on these and other grounds, but it certainly needs opened so that cyclists can be out of the traffic on that congested uphill stretch.

3.2 Leith Walk temporary cycleroute

As promised following extensive campaigning during the last couple of years, a temporary Leith Walk cycleroute has been provided for the 18 months of tramline construction – originally cyclists were to be rerouted along with all the motor traffic! Unfortunately the cycleroute quality is lower than we had expected, with the space taken partly from the footway, with lamp standards in one section of the route, and with poor connections at both ends (to be improved). The 2-way route is on the north side of Leith Walk. Once tramworks are complete the plans are for segregated 1-way cycleroutes on each side of Leith Walk. Traffic lanes are to be reduced, to provide space for the cycleroutes and wider footways.

3.3 York Place to Omni/Playhouse area

This connection is expected to open on **12 October**, via a temporary cycle route in Picardy island. The final route in the island cannot yet be built due to the tramworks. Connecting down from the Omni/ Playhouse area to join the Leith Walk cycle route sounds like it will still be a bit of a mess for a while due to the roadworks – the London Road roundabout is due to be removed as part of the works, and a final cycling solution will not be built until that is done. Dates have not yet been released by the contractors.

3.4 Calton Road to top of Leith Street

Back in 2018 [[Spokes Bulletin 130](#), page 1] Leith Street was discussed at the Council's Transport Committee, with a Spokes deputation urging the need for an uphill cycle lane. Senior officers present said they fully understood the need for this, but it was impossible at the top with 2 traffic lanes – however the decision would be revisited if and when traffic was reduced substantially.

Now, in 2020, one of the early Spaces for People consultations, in June, showed that Leith Street is to be tackled. As with many SfP drawings, there is no key on [the map](#) (!) but we understood this meant one traffic lane would be removed and the space entirely used for widened footway, despite what officers had said at the Transport Committee in 2018. The Spokes response to this SfP consultation is [here](#) (Suggestion 3(1)) - we argued that part of the width should be used for the uphill cycle lane, and part for footway.



Subsequently things have gone very quiet on this scheme. We do not know what is happening, but there is a rumour that there will be no uphill cycle lane – and indeed we are not sure if the Council has decided after all to retain the two uphill traffic lanes and therefore not to widen the footway either.

If you support the need for this vital uphill cycle lane, and wider footway, please contact your councillors and ask them to make sure it goes ahead. Please let us see replies.

4. Decarbonising Transport – **consultation ends 31 August**

Although most transport is the responsibility of the Scottish Government, some important issues still remain at Westminster – for example, fuel duty. The UK government has published the above [consultation report](#) and is seeking views from across the UK.

Please respond to the survey here... <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WF1I3C/>

In order to give you some ideas, the Countryside Charity, CPRE, has produced this truly excellent one-page set of key messages.. www.cpre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Aug-2020_CPRE-key-messages-for-Transport-Decarbonisation-Plan.pdf

Secondly, the UK government has announced a [new policy on cycling](#), **Gear Change**. This includes a very impressive [Gear Change document](#) and some very strong promises, such as that funding to councils for any transport project may depend on the quality and ambition of its cycling and walking policies and projects.

Unfortunately where the new initiative falls down badly is on funding - £2bn over 5 years for the whole of England, compared to the £27bn road construction programme. Indeed, the Scottish Government, for all its faults on active travel, is still way ahead of England on funding, at £18 per person per year, compared to £7 in England, as explained on our website here...

<http://www.spokes.org.uk/2020/05/emergency-covidstreets-cash-scotland-v-england/>

5. Cash for small local Climate Action projects

Do you have an idea for a 3-month community-led climate action project – basically anything to encourage lower carbon use and/or to grow awareness of the climate crisis? Grants of up to £500 are available from the Climate Challenge Fund. Any Scottish-based not-for-profit community organisation can apply, and a large number of grants are available, with application deadlines of 16 Sept, 14 Oct and 11 Nov.

Details... www.keepsotlandbeautiful.org/sustainability-climate-change/climate-challenge-fund/applying-for-ccf-funding/development-grants

6. Water of Leith – new bridge possible – *please help by 25 August*

Proposals to redevelop the former 'Booker' site at Longstone, near the Union Canal aqueduct are expected this week. Spokes, the local community council, and local councillor Gavin Corbett (a Spokes member) are arguing for the development to include a bridge over the Water of Leith.

Due to covid, there will not be the usual public drop-in. Instead, the proposals will be online at inglisgreenroad.co.uk between Aug 12 – Aug 25. We have not yet seen what is proposed, but please support a bridge (and routes to/from it) whether or not it is included in the developer's proposals. Queries to admin@hackland-dore.com.

Please respond to the consultation by 25 August if this opportunity matters to you.

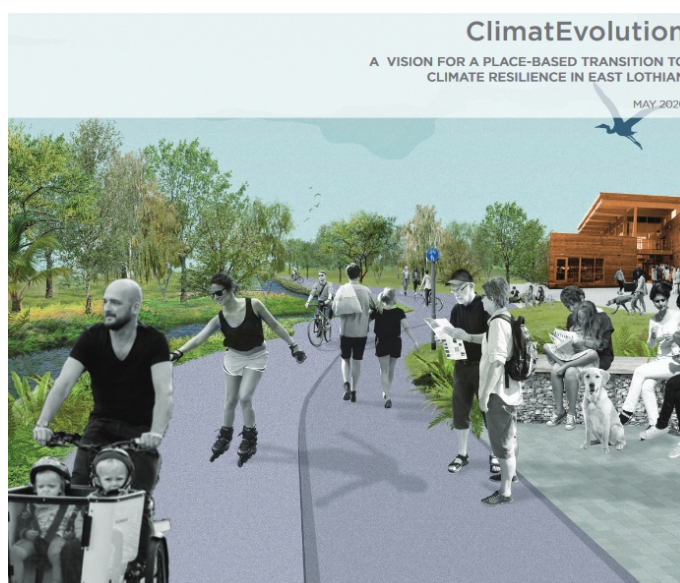
Reasons for providing a bridge include..

- ◆ Greatly improved connections for Asda, the Water of Leith path, New Mart Leisure complex, and to new retail or other public facilities in the site itself, as well as for new residents
- ◆ For some journeys, an alternative to the narrow cobbled aqueduct path
- ◆ Providing a river crossing to halve the current distance of 1.6km between the crossings at Slateford and Gorgie Road
- ◆ Giving more flexibility for local school catchments, with Longstone PS becoming accessible to residents of Chesser/ New Mart.

7. *ClimatEvolution* – Future of Tranent/Longniddry/Prestonpans area – *survey closes 30 September*

Consultation on a vision for a major carbon-neutral community across this entire area. Report [here](#). Consultation page and online survey at eastlothianconsultations.co.uk/housing-environment/climateevolution.

Queries & comments:
climatezone@eastlothian.gov.uk



8. Scottish Government covid-related transport policy – *ongoing*

The Scottish Parliament *Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee* is seeking views on how the government is responding to the covid emergency in terms of transport. Despite their name, this Committee scrutinises government action all aspects of transport, urban as well as rural.

Is the government doing enough to improve conditions for walking and cycling? Are they doing enough to prevent a full return to previous levels of pollution, congestion and road danger? Why are they still planning to invest huge sums in expanding the trunk road network, notably £6000m for dualling the entire A9 and A96? What are they doing about the increased speeding that we are experiencing post-lockdown? Doubtless you have more questions and comments.

The Committee periodically interrogates the Transport Minister, and is seeking submissions to help decide what they should be asking him whilst the pandemic continues.

The Call for Evidence is here... [www.parliament.scot/S5_Rural/COVID - 19 - Call for Evidence pdf \(1\).pdf](http://www.parliament.scot/S5_Rural/COVID_-_19_-_Call_for_Evidence_pdf_(1).pdf)

Submissions so far from individuals and groups (including Friends of the Earth & Paths for All) are here... www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/95981.aspx

The introductory web page is here... www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/115229.aspx

In addition to or instead of doing an individual submission, would anyone volunteer to do a draft Spokes response?

9. Consultations – *Check council, government & some other consultations here*

- ◆ Edinburgh consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk
- ◆ Edinburgh [Edinburgh traffic orders](#)
- ◆ East Lothian www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk
- ◆ Midlothian www.midlothian.gov.uk/consultation/open
- ◆ West Lothian www.westlothian.gov.uk/consultations
- ◆ Scottish Govt consult.gov.scot
- ◆ Transport Scotland 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 Check it out in case there's anything important that doesn't appear in the website addresses above (there often is!)

10. Keeping in touch

- ★ Remember to check out our **website** every so often 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 and you like what we do, go to www.spokes.org.uk/membership.