

# Spokes Action-Update 27 Sept 2020

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## 1. Spokes Maps

Our completely revised Midlothian map 5<sup>th</sup> edition is out, now on water and tear-resistant 'paper' (a form of recyclable polythene, like our other maps) and was launched by councillors from the 3 main parties on ML council.

The entire county was surveyed by local Spokes volunteers, together with Edinburgh OpenStreetMap group, and the map then completely revised and updated by our skilled volunteer cartographer, Andy. The launch was organised by [Spokes Dalkeith](https://www.spokes.org.uk/dalkeith) along with our Maps Group. Finally, map distribution to bike shops, in Edinburgh and in Midlothian, is also undertaken by Spokes volunteers.

The whole process from start to end is a tremendous volunteer project – many congrats and thanks to our Maps group.

For more info, and to see extracts from the map, see the [Sept 16 article](#) on our website.

The map costs £6.95 in the shops – or buy direct from Spokes for the special price of £6 per copy post-free until end October [for this offer, email [office@spokes.org.uk](mailto:office@spokes.org.uk)]

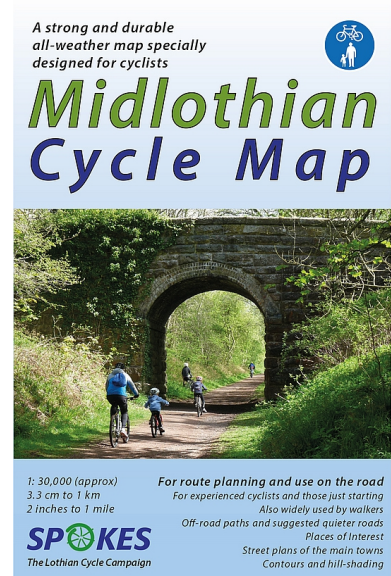
We are next planning a new Edinburgh map edition in 2021.

### New multi-buy pricing

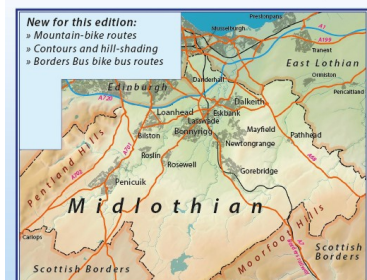
You can now buy any 6 or more assorted Spokes maps at £4.60 each, post-free.

For this offer, email [maps@spokes.org.uk](mailto:maps@spokes.org.uk). Here's some ways to use the multi-buy pricing..

- ◆ Join with friends/colleagues to order 6 (or more) maps - you save roughly 33% on the single price
- ◆ Buy at the multi-buy price and sell to friends at full price to raise cash for a good cause
- ◆ Start thinking about Christmas presents!



5th Edition (2020) fully revised and updated  
Printed on water & tear resistant recyclable polythene



New for this edition:  
• Mountain-bike routes  
• Contours and hill-shading  
• Borders Bus bike bus routes

Main map at 1:30 000 with

• Off-road cycle paths

• Suggested quieter roads

• Easier mountain bike routes

• National Cycle Network

• Places of interest

• Pubs & cafés in rural areas

Town maps at 1:10 000 of

• Dalkeith & Eskbank

• Bonnyrigg & Lasswade

• Penicuik

• Newtongrange

• Gorebridge

• Loanhead, Straiton & Bilston

• Roslin

• Mayfield

SPOKES

The Lothian Cycle Campaign

1500 978 0 357 118 2 9

9 780557 311875

Spokes

St Martin's Community Resource Centre

232 Dalry Road, Edinburgh EH11 2JG

0131 313 2114 (answer-phone)

[spokes.org.uk](http://spokes.org.uk)

HDPE

Recycle with carrier

bags at larger

supermarkets

£6.95

## 2. Bike/Rail – especially Central Belt to Aberdeen & Inverness

There have been several positive moves by ScotRail and Transport Scotland on bike carriage, notably...

- ◆ The new Glasgow/Edinburgh 6-coach and 8-coach electric class 385 trains are much better for bike carriage than we had feared – there are 2 bike areas, as well as 2 areas for wheelchairs etc which can be used when vacant. The bike areas are flexible spaces accommodating several bikes. There are clear bike symbols on the outside and (as we had suggested) a huge bike symbol on the floor.
- ◆ Although it has been taking ages, the plans for special bike carriages on the West Highland lines are in progress – these coaches will take 20 bikes, plus a good number of seats, and we expect to see them on some services in 2021. In the winter, when there are fewer bikes, the coaches will also take skis etc (global heating permitting!). They will be a vital contribution to the local tourist economies – see [this report](#) by Transform Scotland.

At the complete other end of the spectrum, bike capacity on the refurbished HST trains to Aberdeen and Inverness can only be described as truly appalling. Instead of the promised 20 spaces (in the power cars) there are just 2 spaces (in a former toilet space). What is more, these spaces are the hanging sort, and are so jammed in that people without strong arms or sufficient height have to ask other passengers for help. And yet these are critical mainline railways for tourism and for business journeys.

**ScotRail and the Scottish Government are well aware of the problems, and discussions are underway – but a much greater sense of urgency and action is needed. If you are affected, please email your MSPs. Find them here... [beta.parliament.scot/msps/current-and-previous-msps](https://beta.parliament.scot/msps/current-and-previous-msps). Tell them why you are affected, then ask them to let you know what is going to be done, and when. Please send us any useful replies.**

*Here are some possible solutions...*

- ◆ **Immediate** - Now that passenger numbers are significantly down, and likely to remain so for a long period, a few seats could be removed from an existing carriage to create flexible storage spaces for bikes, just like those on the Class 385s above. This should be easy, quick and cheap to do
- ◆ **Medium term** - Most HST trains have 4 coaches, but ScotRail plans to add a 5<sup>th</sup> coach to some or possibly all the trains. These 5<sup>th</sup> coaches are not yet refurbished – so they could be modified to carry 20 or so bikes like those on the West Highland line (above). This would make these trains far more appropriate for the main tourist arteries into the Highlands and north east Scotland.
- ◆ We think the option of bike spaces in power cars is still realistic. The operators are concerned this could lengthen train stopping times, but careful management measures should avoid this.

### 3. Spaces for People (SfP)

An incredible amount has happened or is underway, with many 'temporary' projects in these categories...

- segregated cycle lanes
- road closures
- school safety [many of these are significant, involving road closures – notably Sciennes Road]
- town centres
- low traffic areas.

All the schemes so far, and the Spokes responses, are on our website Edinburgh covid streets page, here... [www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/edinburgh-covid-schemes](http://www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/edinburgh-covid-schemes)

On segregated lanes, the Council has promised 35km, and the programme is well underway. Pre-covid, never in our wildest dreams could we have imagined 35km of segregated cycle lanes on main roads being implemented within 6-12 months! The current status is as follows...

- *implemented or under construction*: Mound to Meadows; Old Dalkeith Rd to Infirmary; Crewe Rd South to WGH; Comiston Road south of Greenbank; Pennywell Road; Ferry Road
- *consultation or approval stage*: Buccleuch St; Causewayside; Lanark and Longstone Roads; Gilmerton Road; Craigmillar Park/ Minto St; Duddingston Road; Melville Drive; Wester Hailes Rd; Meadowplace Rd; Dundee St/Fountainbridge
- *still to come*: we're not sure where, but more are expected.

Whilst there have been some complaints about insufficient consultation, covid has shown what can happen when it needs to! There are big lessons which need to shake up Council and Government processes for permanent schemes. It is truly shocking that major Council schemes, such as Meadows-Canal and CCWEL have taken 5-10 years so far, with money allocated yet no work started. The Council is to blame for excessive numbers of consultations on each scheme, whilst the Scottish Government is to blame for massive delays caused by outdated Traffic Order rules.

We have prepared a paper on how the Council could implement permanent schemes far more quickly – whilst allowing for full consultation, indeed arguably better consultation than at present. For our proposals to be fully implemented, the Scottish Government needs to get a move on with their overdue promise to review and update the rules for Traffic Orders. Our paper is [here](#).

Finally, note that many (though not all) the SfP schemes require Traffic Orders, and have been implemented under Temporary Traffic Orders (TTO). Such Orders only last 18 months, and cannot be renewed. *Unless the Scottish Government changes the rules* the schemes can *only* remain in place if the Council advertises and passes permanent Orders (TRO/RSO). These are often staff-time-consuming, problematic and may have to be referred to the Scottish Government for a final decision, with inordinate delays. In England, the rules make it much more straightforward to convert TTO schemes to permanent ones, but it is less easy under the existing Scottish Government rules.

**Please consider emailing your MSPs about this – ask for the review of Traffic Orders to be speeded up, and for new rules to make it easier for Councils to make successful temporary Spaces for People schemes permanent. Find your MSPs here... [beta.parliament.scot/msps/current-and-previous-msps](https://beta.parliament.scot/msps/current-and-previous-msps).**

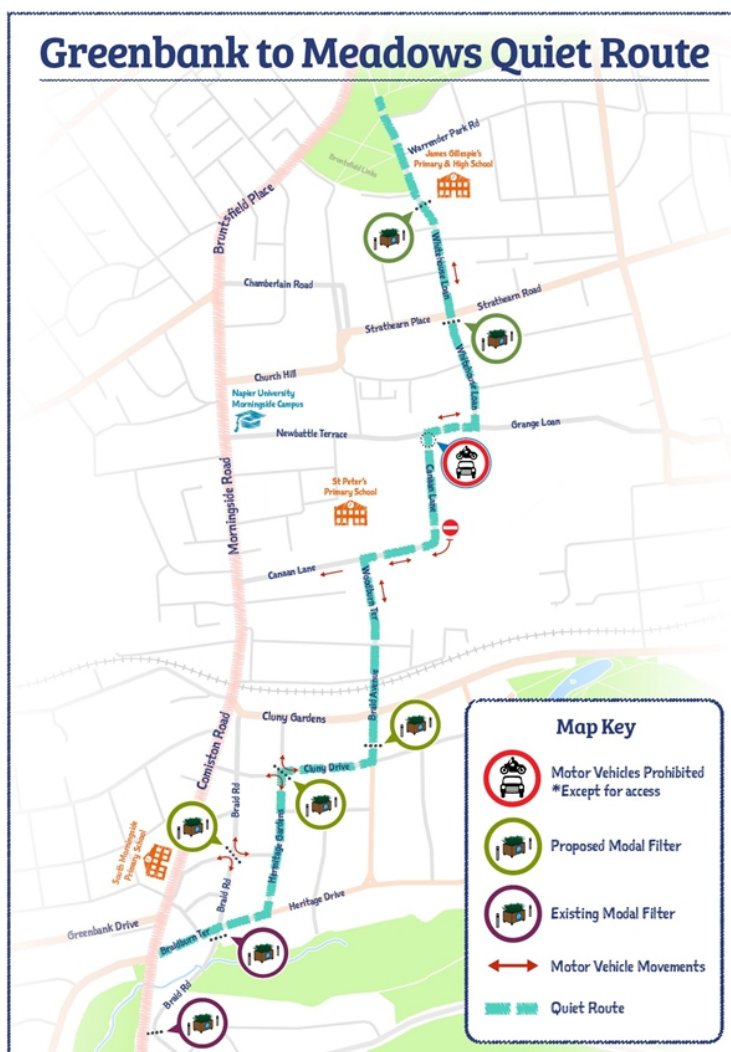
#### 4. Greenbank/Comiston to Meadows

As part of the Spaces for People (SfP) 'pop-up' active travel schemes, the council is planning a "quiet route" from Greenbank to the Meadows, formed by various road closures. This route will be a key link between the new segregated lanes on Comiston Rd and the cycle network at the Meadows, and will be transformative for kids cycling to the schools in the area - Gillespie's Primary and High, St Peter's, etc.

A map of the draft proposals is shown – this may be adjusted further, as discussions between officers, councillors and others are continuing, and there is also debate about how it will tie in with the Braid Road closure – and indeed, whether that should continue or not.

Although the scheme should stop rat-running, car access to all properties will remain. The Council has also consulted emergency services to ensure access will not be impaired.

As with all SfP projects, the scheme is "try then modify" with cheap materials so it can be easily amended on the basis of experience if any problems do arise in practice.



Although the proposals have not yet been formally announced, the draft ideas as in the above map have been circulated via councillors, and there is already controversy. **If you like the idea and live in or use the area, please contact your councillors in support.**

Blackford Safe Routes (who organise the Gillespie Primary School bike bus) have written a template letter of support for residents of Morningside ward (to send to councillors / MSP) at the link below:

<http://blackfordsaferoutes.co.uk/greenbank-to-meadows-quiet-route-template-letter-of-support/>

It would be useful to modify the letter with your own thoughts, so as to personalise it.

If you live in another ward you can find your councillors at [edinburgh.gov.uk/council-democracy](https://edinburgh.gov.uk/council-democracy)

## 5. James Harrison memorial

James Harrison was killed whilst cycling to work at the Royal Infirmary in June 2020. A friend of his wrote...

*When our dear friend, James Harrison, was killed while cycling to work in June 2020 his family lost a loving father, the NHS a committed professional nurse, and his club, Corstorphine AAC, a dedicated athlete, organiser and official. We all lost a friend whose amiable personality and broad smile brought a sense of inclusiveness; he was warm, kind and genuine, a true gentleman.*

*Whenever I saw James on social media it was usually to call out unsafe driving and parking, or to champion causes such as environmental projects and safe cycling. He was never afraid to speak up for something he believed in and those things were always about the greater good; extremely unselfish, it was about how he could make a difference for others.*

An open-air memorial was held at the spot shortly after his death, attended by over 200 people – we notified Spokes members in our [July 1<sup>st</sup> Action-Update](#). Thank you if you were able to go along.

James's friends have set up a Just-Giving memorial and will be very kindly donating the proceeds to Spokes general funds. Already they have raised well over the £2000 target. The Just Giving site is at...

[www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/tweedforspeed-jamesharrison](http://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/tweedforspeed-jamesharrison)



James Harrison memorial

photo: twitter @Lollercake

## 6. Scottish Government consultations

Please respond to any of these consultations which concern you....

- ◆ [Draft Infrastructure Plan 2021-2025](#) ... **ends 19 November**
  - Scotland's infrastructure priorities (including transport) for the next 5 years
  - Lots of positive words on sustainable transport but the actual proposals completely belie this. No increase in funding for active travel, rail or bus beyond what is already announced - but continuing plans to expand trunk roads, with costs not specified.
  - The consultation says that the Plan “builds on” the [first report of the Infrastructure Commission](#) but this is far from true in respect of transport. We summarised relevant recommendations of the Commission in [Spokes 136](#), page 5. The Plan does not build on these!!
- ◆ [Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030](#) ... **ends 1 December**
  - Aim for '**Vision Zero**' by 2050, meaning zero fatalities or serious injuries on Scotland's roads
  - 2030 interim target to halve the number of people killed or seriously injured
  - Spokes has not yet looked at this consultation – *please send us a copy of your submission.*

## 7. Huge New Town planning application ref 20/03034/FUL – ends 9 Oct

A major application (residential and commercial) has been submitted for the vacant site between Dundas Street and King James V park, just south of Eyre Place. In line with Council policies, the development will have reduced car parking and will have many 100s of bike parking spaces, for residents, staff and visitors.

The original plans had a major east-west cycle connection, from Dundas Street to the Park, which then connects to the tunnel leading to the North Edinburgh cycle network. *If of good quality design*, this would be brilliant, enabling people to avoid the cobbled and heavily-trafficked Eyre Place, which will also be the car access to the site. Unfortunately the route includes a lengthy zig-zag ramp at the Dundas Street end.

High quality routes are also vital at the King George V end of the site, enabling people from Leith and north Edinburgh to access the site entirely car free via the North Edinburgh Network and the tunnel to the park.

Unfortunately an article on the [developer's website](#) says that cycle facilities have now been “significantly” watered down, following objections from “some” people living nearby. *“Some residents were concerned about increased cycling through the park. The proposals for pathway access have been significantly reduced to reflect these concerns and to manage the interface between pedestrians and cyclists, with one of the proposed access points being removed.”*

We do not yet know how this has affected the original proposals, though we think/hope the central east-west route remains (albeit with the zig zag ramp). The [planning application](#) is hard to understand, with over 400 documents, and we have not yet fully worked out what is happening to the cycling infrastructure. Maps and diagrams often show paths without saying if they are intended to be shared or pedestrian-only.

**If you are concerned, please (a) submit your comments to the Planning Application ... and ... (b) contact your local councillors.** To submit comments, go to the link above, then click the box *Make a Comment*. We suggest you say this is an **objection** unless your points are adopted, when you would happily withdraw.

Say why this matters to you, and then we suggest you ask (using your own words) that any approval of the application should include a condition requiring ...

- a high quality east-west cyclist route between Dundas St and King George V park route (for North Edinburgh Network), if possible with the zig-zag ramp redesigned more bike-friendly
- detailed design (e.g. width) to respect the developer's intended high levels of cycle use
- good connections from that route to all cycle parking & storage areas and to nearby roads

## 8. Slower speeds in Edinburgh: 40 → 30

The Council had promised that once the city-wide 20mph policy was fully in place, the next step would be to look at which 40mph streets should be converted to 30mph. A list of which roads will be converted is in a draft Traffic Order, TRO/20/20 (a coincidence that it is no.20 in year 2020 – nothing to do with 20mph!!)

The Order is expected to be widely publicised for objections later this year, but it is now [on the Council website](#) at an earlier comment-only stage. At this stage it is still possible for the Order to be modified before it reaches the final objections stage.

The list of 40mph roads covered by the draft Order can be found by clicking the above link and downloading the Order. They have been chosen largely as being those “with urban frontages.”

**If you would like to suggest adding any other 40mph roads (or any other changes) email [trafficorders@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:trafficorders@edinburgh.gov.uk). We strongly advise also contacting your local councillors - this is the stage when they are likely to be most influential.** Find your councillors at [edinburgh.gov.uk/council-democracy](http://edinburgh.gov.uk/council-democracy).

**Below is a list of 40mph roads in Edinburgh which are *not* in the draft Order.** Notes...

- ◆ This list may not be 100% accurate – some roads may be missing, and some may not be entirely 40mph. The list is from OpenStreetMap data – but if a road particularly concerns you then presumably you will know its current speed limit!
- ◆ Most of these roads do not have “urban frontages”, which is probably why they are not included in the Order. However, if you consider they should be added, say so and explain why it matters.
- ◆ It is possible that a few of these are to be converted to 30mph under other projects – e.g. possibly Braid Hills Drive. However, better safe than sorry, so do write in about all that concern you.

### ***Not in the draft order...***

- Old Dalkeith Road (Ferniehill Drive/Wisp section)
- Lasswade Road
- Burdiehouse Road
- Braid Hills Drive
- Turnhouse Road (west of Turnhouse Farm Road)
- Cliftonhall Road
- Clifton Road
- The A71 at Dalmahoy, and at Hermiston
- Edinburgh Road (Newbridge)
- The B924 (Road from South Queensferry to the A90)
- Kirkliston-Burnshot roads
- Glasgow Road between Ratho Station and Gogar Roundabout

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

- ◆ **Edinburgh** [consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk](https://consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk)
- ◆ **Edinburgh** [Edinburgh traffic orders](#), includes....
  - **Ending 16 Oct** – [TRO/20/20](#) speed limit reductions 40mph to 30 – see section 4(????) above
- ◆ **East Lothian** [www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk](http://www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk), includes....
  - **Ending 30 Sept** – [ClimatEvolution](#) vision for the area around Tranent, Prestonpans, Longniddry
- ◆ **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](https://consult.gov.scot), includes....
  - *Infrastructure Investment Plan* – see section ???? above
  - *Scotland Road Safety Framework* – see section ???? above
- ◆ **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](https://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. Spokes working group changes

With the massive and ongoing Council [Spaces for People proposals](#) (often several sets of plans per week) – see 4 above - and the existence of 3 newish active local-area Spokes groups in addition to our central Planning, Resources and Maps groups, there is increased need for central coordination to ensure consistency, mutual awareness and cooperation, to avoid overlap, and to ensure that all Council consultations are responded to by the appropriate group or groups. Dave du Feu is undertaking this role.

In [Planning Group](#), Sandy Scotland has stepped down as coordinator, and a quadrumvirate of David French, Euan Renton, John Robson & Chris Paton is coordinating the group. Regular online meetings are underway.

In [Resources Group](#), Dave du Feu has stepped down as coordinator due to the above new time-consuming role. Mies Knottenbelt has volunteered to be a new joint coordinator but a joint person is still needed to work with her (if necessary it could be someone not currently in Resources Group but with relevant interests and time to devote). Whilst there are volunteers for specific activities, the group can only function fully when there is coordination, organisation of meetings, etc. Unfortunately this has meant delays or inaction on several regular Resources activities such as public meetings, the annual competition, stalls, etc. Covid has of course made such activities more difficult, but there are opportunities nonetheless, both online and otherwise.

[Maps Group](#) tends to only meet as and when required, since much of its activity depends on the stage of development of the map currently being updated, but has achieved a great outcome with the new Midlothian map (section 1 above).

Links to info about the *local area groups* are [here](#).

## 11. 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 and you like what we do, go to [www.spokes.org.uk/membership](http://www.spokes.org.uk/membership).