

# Spokes Action-Update 9 November 2020

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## 1. Spokes Maps

Spokes maps have been selling really well in 2020 - helped by the pandemic's encouragement to travel and exercise by bike, the publicity surrounding our excellent new Midlothian map, an initial discount for Midlothian orders, and our new 'hustlers' group of volunteers who check periodically that bike shops have maps in stock.

The local [Spokes Dalkeith group](#), along with our Maps group, organised a launch for the **Midlothian map** and managed to get along leading councillors from the 3 main parties on the Council. Not only did this result in good local publicity, but it was a great opportunity for the group to press their case for Midlothian Council to set up a Cycle Forum. See more about the launch on our website [[16.9.20 posting](#)].

We are now working on a completely revised edition of the **Edinburgh map**, hopefully to be published around the middle of 2021, and are very grateful to the 20+ Spokes members who will be re-surveying the entire area covered by the map.



*With Midlothian Council finely balanced between Labour, Conservative and SNP, we were delighted that councillors from each party came together to launch the new map! – Cllr John Hackett (Lab), Provost Peter Smaill (Con) and Cllr Colin Cassidy (SNP). Accompanied by up-and-coming Spokes member Audrey, representing the female sex and the younger generation!*

## Maps volunteer help needed

1. We need a volunteer (or two) to **help with graphics work** on the new Edinburgh map. You must have access to Adobe Illustrator (or another graphics package that can read & write Illustrator .ai files). We would appreciate help with a number of straightforward graphics tasks needed to help get the draft map finished and ready for publication. This is likely to involve intermittent tasks between now and next April. If you may be able to help, please email Andy.. [mail@andyfollis.com](mailto:mail@andyfollis.com).
2. Does anyone have a copy of **Adobe Creative Suite CS6 (Windows)** they could donate or sell to Spokes? If you may be able to help, please email Andy, as above.
3. **Shops hustlers** needed! We have a group of volunteers who periodically visit a few bike shops in their area, say 3-4 times a year, to check whether they need to order more Spokes maps (most shops are really bad at re-ordering when they run out, and need a visit). We currently need volunteers for parts of the following areas – West Lothian, East Lothian, Newington, Canonmills, Leith Links to Jocks Lodge (If you would enjoy helping in another area we might be able to squeeze you in). You would probably cover between 1 and 4 shops, depending on distances and what you are comfy with. You would *not* have to deal with finances or deliveries. If you might be able to help, please contact Robert at this email address... [mapsco-ord@spokes.org.uk](mailto:mapsco-ord@spokes.org.uk).
4. Do you have significant **project organisation experience** and some time to donate to Spokes? We may consider repeating (with variations) a major project we undertook some 20 years ago, funded by a Scottish Office (pre- Scottish Government) scheme to boost cycle use. The idea is to distribute map vouchers to every household in wide areas of the city, through Royal Mail. In the previous project, 200,000 households were covered (see [Maps History](#)) and we worked jointly with a staffed organisation who did all the 'donkey work' of dealing with orders etc. Substantial grants for projects to encourage cycling or walking are now available under the Scottish Government's [Smarter Choices Smarter Places \(SCSP\)](#) scheme, so a similar project might be possible. The details would be up for discussion but could include map vouchers to be redeemed at local bike shops or by post, research on the impact of the scheme, how effective it was in different types of area, etc. The project will only be possible with an overall volunteer with relevant organisational experience, and ideally a small subgroup.

## 2. Bike sheds consultation – closes 12 November

After nearly a decade of [Spokes lobbying](#), the Scottish Government is at last seriously considering allowing families to install a modest front garden bike storage shed without the hassle, uncertainty and £200+ cost of seeking planning permission. However, their proposals need tweaking or we will get a substandard solution which leaves many householders choosing between an inadequate facility or going back to the uncertainties and costs of planning permission.



At present, planning permission is required for any 'ancillary building' in a front garden – indeed it is arguable that a small dog kennel or even a hedgehog house needs planning permission! The government is now consulting on whether to grant *permitted development rights* (PDR) for bike sheds or containers in front gardens, provided they are under a certain size (and perhaps meet some other criteria such as colour) – meaning that planning permission is not needed.

Whilst we are delighted to see the consultation at long last happening, our concern is the proposed maximum dimensions under which PDR would be granted.

*The government is proposing:* 1.2m height, 2.0m width, 1.0m depth in conservation areas (1.5m depth in non-conservation areas)

*We are urging:* 1.5m height, 2.5m width, 1.2m depth (possibly greater depth in non-conservation areas)

Our proposals would not make a big difference visually, but would make all the difference in useability for the average household, particularly as regards height.

Anyone needing a shed larger than the finally agreed dimensions will still need to apply for planning permission.

In the early 2010s, Spokes was involved in a series of hugely distressing cases where householders were refused planning permission, or told to remove existing bike sheds under threat of a £1000 fine. People told us things like: *"This has been a really really horrible period for us – and it's not over yet"*.



As a result, we worked with the Council on a factsheet which advises householders on the dimensions (and other criteria) under which planning permission is *likely* to be granted, and this was approved by the Council [Planning Committee of 3 Oct 2013](#). The dimensions in the factsheet are what we recommend above, 1.5x2.5x1.2. As far as we know every subsequent application for planning permission which complies with the factsheet has been approved. The only people who have sought Spokes help with problems are one or two with significantly larger sheds. Of course, even sheds below the criteria still require planning permission.

### What you can do

- See our website article [www.spokes.org.uk/2020/10/bike-sheds-breakthrough](http://www.spokes.org.uk/2020/10/bike-sheds-breakthrough)
- Respond to the consultation. The above article gives links to the consultation and tells you which questions are relevant (the consultation covers a lot more than just PDR for garden sheds).
- See the official [Spokes response](#)
- [Contact your MSPs](#). Ask them to support your concerns and to speak to the relevant Minister.
- Help publicise the consultation by retweeting [our tweet](#).

### Bike shed security

- A Spokes member has had 3 bikes stolen from a metal 'Asgard' garden bike store, sawing the hasps and using a crowbar to force the roof open. Please be aware of this risk. Keep photos of your bike(s); consider a security camera and possibly ground anchors within the shed.
- Police Scotland has just issued a new bike security leaflet, which will shortly be on our website on this page [www.spokes.org.uk/documents/advice/security](http://www.spokes.org.uk/documents/advice/security).

### 3. Spaces for People (SfP)

The Council's Transport Committee meets on Thursday 12 November, to discuss amongst other things a massive report (paper 7.6) on the SfP projects now in place and those planned for the future. The report lists well over 100 projects, some very small, some very major. You can find all Committee papers here... <https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=136&MIId=5660&Ver=4>.

We have tweeted about this report [here](#). RTs are welcome!

Some of the major projects still to come (subject to approval by the Committee) are below. This is just a taster – see the report appendices for the full lists. Several of these have already been consulted on and are now in final design or awaiting implementation. For Spokes consultation responses, see... [www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/edinburgh-covid-schemes](http://www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/edinburgh-covid-schemes)

- **South Bridge** bus gate (northbound), segregated bike lanes, wider footways
- **Leith Street** uphill bike lane – this is not definite, it is “to be considered” along with the above
- **Broughton Street** uphill bike lane & wider footway
- **A90 and A1** cycle, bus, walk facilities
- **Greenbank to Meadows** quiet route, including retaining Braid Rd closure
- **Duddingston Rd / Mayfield Rd / Craigmillar Park / Gilmerton Rd** (& more) segregated bike lanes

Although outweighed by the good news, there are also disappointments, including the following. These projects were assessed in outline or in detail but had serious difficulties such as road widths, costs, impact on public transport, or other factors. Some may go ahead in future under wider projects and other funding.

- **Newington corridor** – not going ahead (though Craigmillar Park and South Bridge are)
- **Telford Road** – seg cycle lanes not going ahead
- **Warriston Road** – closure *to be removed*
- **Duddingston Rd West** – no seg cycle lanes (but Duddingston Rd going ahead)
- **Princes St** – no cycle lanes meantime

If you have views on any of the proposals in the report, email your Councillors. Send us any useful replies.

### 4. Cyclist death near Portobello Kings Road junction

We are devastated to hear of a second death near this junction, following the death there of Stuart Elliott in 2019. Heather Stronach was a 36-year-old woman from Musselburgh and was killed in a crash with a lorry on 2 November. [Police are appealing for information](#).

The Council has been in touch with Spokes, and is working on both immediate and longer-term measures. This is being handled by the Spokes Party group. If you have any ideas or relevant information please email [spokesparty@gmail.com](mailto:spokesparty@gmail.com).

Most years there are between zero and 3 cyclist deaths in Edinburgh. Two at the same junction, in little more than a year, suggests there is something very wrong here.

### 5. CCWEL ... first mini-section opens; phase 3 potential 2-year delay

- The section from **Elder St to Picardy** is open. The few seconds it takes to cycle are very enjoyable! Full story and future notes here... [www.spokes.org.uk/2020/10/ccwel-first-wee-section-to-open](http://www.spokes.org.uk/2020/10/ccwel-first-wee-section-to-open)
- Construction of **phases 1 and 2**, Roseburn to Charlotte Square, is expected to begin in early 2021.
- RSO Traffic Orders for **phase 3**, St Andrews Square to Elder Street, have now gone through the public objections stage, but two objections to North St David St section (one from Living Streets) remain unwithdrawn. Legally the Council must now refer the two objections to the Scottish Government for a decision and possible hearing. For objections to phase 1 this process literally, took *over 2 years* of hearings, submissions and delays, after which they were wholly dismissed.
- More on the council website [HERE](#).



## 6. COP26 Climate Conference [www.ukcop26.org](http://www.ukcop26.org)

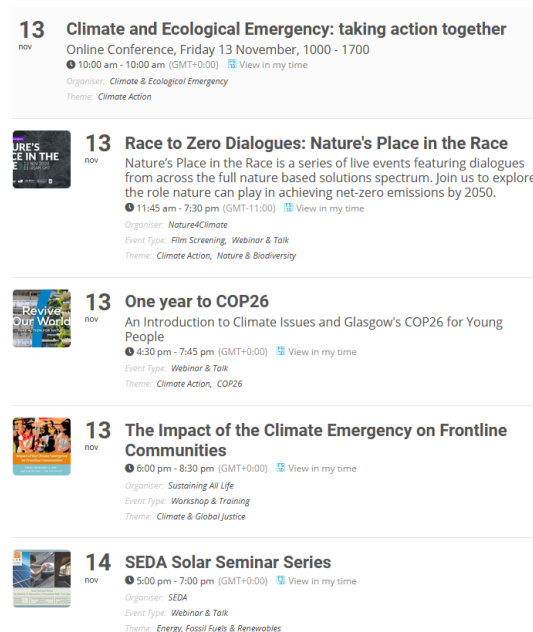
The delayed international Climate Conference is now to be held in Glasgow in November 2021.

A website [www.climatefringe.org](http://www.climatefringe.org) has been created by [SCCS](#), Scotland's umbrella coalition of voluntary, charitable and other organisations. The Climate Fringe website aims to...

- build momentum in the run up to COP, drawing together events such as training, conferences, workshops, across Scotland and potentially further afield, into a larger whole - *The Climate Fringe*
- be a place that everyone can contribute through creating an event, or attending an event, sharing audiences and opportunities and learn how to get more involved
- build an audience to develop our platform for hosting people at COP - home stays for overseas delegates, volunteers for our COP26 hub work, and much more
- be a source of information for people coming to COP, and while they are at COP, on events and activities led by Civil Society both inside and outside spaces of COP.

Please use the site – not just to find information, but also to add any relevant events that you are aware of.

Edinburgh University has a great COP26 website, with background, resources, relevant events and what the University itself is doing. [www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/cop26](http://www.ed.ac.uk/sustainability/cop26)



A typical clip from [www.climatefringe.org](http://www.climatefringe.org) events page

## 7. 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
  - A basic issue is that 2050 is very far distant – particularly given that the climate crisis and the Scottish Government's own legal 2030 climate targets mean there need to be major shakeups in transport policy and investment in the near future. Vision Zero should be built into this.
- ◆ [Cleaner Air for Scotland 2](#) ... **ends 22 Jan 2021**
  - We have not yet looked at this new consultation, and welcome comments from members
  - The consultation recommendations are meant to be based on the report of an expert review body, which made tough recommendations – see page 5 of [Spokes Bulletin 136](#). However, the consultation seriously waters them down. For example, the expert group recommended that “*additions to the trunk road and motorway network should be significantly de-prioritised and ideally end within the next 5 or so years.*” However the Scottish Government's consultation instead proposes that “*capacity expansion of the trunk road and motorway networks will be de-prioritised over the next 20 years.*”

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

- ◆ Edinburgh [consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk](http://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), includes (see above for more info)....
  - *Infrastructure Investment Plan*
  - *Scotland Road Safety Framework*
  - *Cleaner Air for Scotland*
- ◆ **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!)

## 9. 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).