

Spokes Action-Update 28 Nov 2020

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0. Finding your councillors

Find your councillors by typing your postcode on [this page](#). If you already know your ward, [go here](#). Note that everyone has either 3 or 4 councillors, usually from assorted parties.

1. Bike sheds consultation, Edinburgh Council response - *urgent*

As you will know from our [previous circular](#), the Scottish Government has consulted on introducing PDR (permitted development rights) for modestly sized front garden sheds, which would mean that the £202 cost and the bureaucracy of a planning application would no longer be needed. The consultation also proposed improved PDR for sheds in back gardens, shared properties, etc.



Thank you if you responded to the consultation!

However, we are concerned that Edinburgh Council has not so far given this government proposal the fulsome support we had hoped, and indeed expected. Spokes member Cllr Chas Booth has therefore put forward a motion for the Planning Committee on **Tuesday 2 December** to commit the Council to supporting PDR.

If this concerns you, please email your councillors very urgently asking them to speak to their party representatives on the Planning Committee, in support of motion 11.1 on extending permitted development rights for sheds. If you have any relevant personal experience, please mention it.

See (0) above for how to find your councillors. It would be great if you could email all 3 (or 4) as at present it is not clear which parties will or will not support the motion.

In case you wish more background, see the following...

- ◆ Cllr Booth's motion ... democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/ieIssueDetails.aspx?IId=13122&PlanId=0&Opt=3#AI19425
- ◆ Spokes briefing sheet, sent to the Committee members ... www.spokes.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/201202-PI-Cttee-sheds-PDR-Spokes-letter.pdf
- ◆ Background to the government consultation ... www.spokes.org.uk/2020/10/bike-sheds-breakthrough

You can watch Tuesday's Planning Committee on the Council webcast... edinburgh.public-i.tv/core/portal/home
The full agenda is [here](#). The meeting begins at 2pm.

2. Spaces for People (SfP)

There are a number of developments under the covid-related *Spaces for People* schemes where you may wish to make your voice heard. See sections 3-5 below.

For more background on SfP, and how Spokes has responded to the many different projects existing and proposed, see this page... www.spokes.org.uk/documents/members-campaigning/edinburgh/edinburgh-covid-schemes. There was also a [major report](#) on progress at the 12 November Transport Committee.

If you email councillors about any of the schemes below, Spokes would appreciate if you would forward us a copy of your email.

It's worth remembering that what has happened in just 8 or so months is incredible. Thinking back to the end of 2019, who would have imagined segregated cycle lanes on several main roads in less than a year, with more on the way soon - even if they are in a temporary rapid-installation design.

3. SfP - Leith Links closure

There is pressure on the Council to re-open the closure to cars of Links Gardens, which cuts Leith Links in half. In response, a group of local residents, including some Spokes members, is arguing for the closure to stay. Apart from the many benefits for local people, this closure is also very helpful for people cycling between Portobello and Leith, including to connect to the Water of Leith and North Edinburgh paths.

As well as lobbying the Council, the residents have a petition, which also outlines the scheme's benefits. If you support them please sign the petition www.change.org/p/city-of-edinburgh-council-keep-links-gardens-closed.

4. SfP - A70, A1, A90 cycle segregation

The Council has approved SfP schemes for segregated cycle routes on lengthy sections of the above arterial roads. Some details are given in the recent [Council report](#). (appendices 2B, 2C, 2D respectively). There is a lot of local pushback on some of these schemes, particularly the A70 – which covers parts of Longstone and Inglis Green Roads as well as Lanark Road. Whilst the schemes are now approved, the details are not finalised, and so feedback to councillors could make the schemes weaker – or stronger!

If any of these schemes affect you, particularly if you live in these areas, please email your ward councillors in support, saying why this matters to you. If there are detailed aspects that concern or particularly please you, mention that too. To find your councillors, see section 0 at the start of this circular.

You can see the initial proposals and the Spokes responses on our [covid schemes web page](#). Note that these consultations are now over; officers are working on final details, with councillors still having influence. This why we suggest emailing councillors at this stage, rather than Spaces for People officers.

5. SfP – Greenbank to Meadows Quiet Route – by Tues 8 Dec, 5pm

This scheme too was approved in principle in the above [Council report](#) (Appendix 2E). However, it is at an earlier stage than the schemes in (4) above. Again, there is a fair bit of opposition from some quarters, so it is important for people who live in the area to send support.

Please email spacesforpeople@edinburgh.gov.uk and cc your ward councillors (see section 0 above for how to find them). Say why the scheme matters to you, and of course if there are details you specially like or dislike, mention that also.

As with all the Spaces for People projects, consultation is done as follows...

- ◆ it is initially a temporary project (but see last bullet point below)
- ◆ the [initial consultation](#) is with 'stakeholders' such as the local community council, councillors and a few city-wide groups such as Spokes and Living Streets - but individuals can also write in
- ◆ once the scheme is in place, the council uses feedback and may make modifications i.e. consultation is a form of "try then modify"
- ◆ if the council later wishes to make the scheme permanent, then legally it must then go through the normal lengthy full consultation process.

ROAD OPEN!

The map suggests that 'Road Open to...' signs, rather than solely 'Road closed...', may be used. We'd love this to happen, although the standard design here is now widely used in London and would seem to be more sensible than coming up with the new design shown on the map.

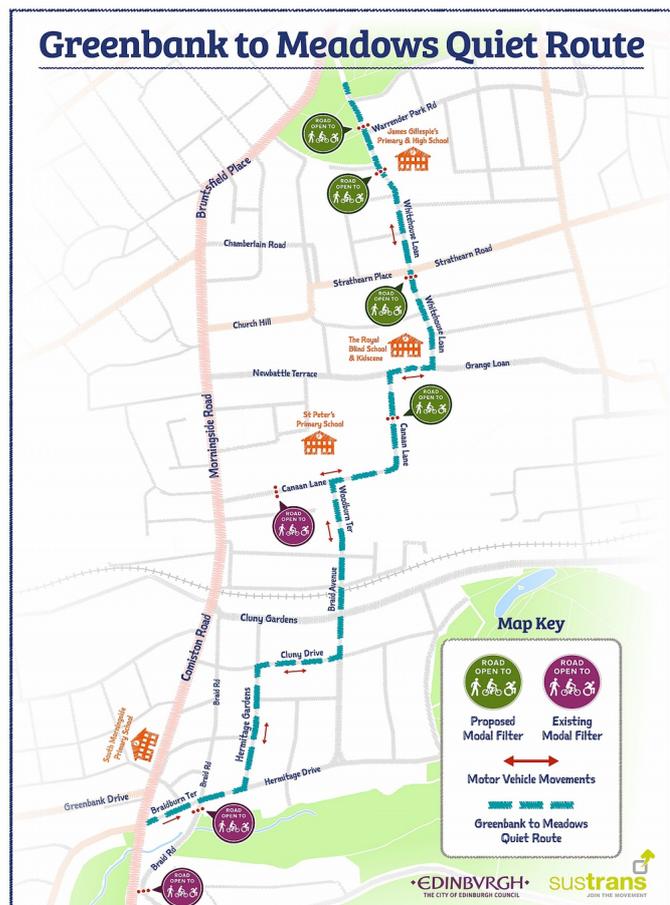


photo: [Jack Fifield](#)

6. Better Broughton – *public meeting Dec 9, 19.00-2030*

Local residents have set up a group to work towards a more people-friendly area, centred around Broughton Street. For more info, see their website <https://betterbroughton.wordpress.com>

Their ideas include supporting the uphill segregated cycle lane and wider footways in Broughton Street as proposed in the above Council [SfP report](#) (4.36.1) – also better pedestrian crossings at the roundabout (4.36.2), though bike improvements are also badly needed here. No details are yet available, as far as we know, since the report only approves the go-ahead to design the project.

The uphill bike lane, together with the Picardy facilities, the potential Leith Street uphill cycle lane (hinted at in the report, Appendix 4, table 2) and promised segregated bike lanes on South Bridge (appendix 2A) have the makings of a continuous north-south safe route. We have asked the Council to consider this.

Better Broughton is holding an online public meeting to discuss ideas for the area. All welcome. You can book here (free)... www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ideas-for-a-better-broughton-an-on-line-public-meeting-tickets-130867439033

7. Spokes traffic count

Our regular November traffic count went ahead – masked and sanitised! Thank you to Barbara and Mies, the organisers, and all the count volunteers.



It was great to see a few families cycling to school during our count!

pic: Mies Knottenbelt

The results seem to point to an even bigger drop in commuter travel (of all types) than expected. There are also strong signs of a significant shift from bus to car, though total car numbers are still down.

The outcome of these shifting patterns is a noticeable drop in the proportion of vehicles which are bikes, our usual indicator. Had we been able to count numbers of *people* rather than *vehicles*, we might have got a different result – but we cannot count the number of people in buses, which probably used to be more than all other means combined (not counting walking) and is now known to have fallen dramatically.

More positively – bikes did best on the Mound to George IV Bridge route, and cars were well down here. This may be an indication that the fantastic uphill Mound cycling improvements are attracting new people to bikes, making up for former bike commuters who now work from home or have been made redundant.

Our website has a full report on the results... www.spokes.org.uk/2020/11/covid-commuter-count

It is important to note that...

- ◆ the count is solely inner-city; commuting may be different further out
- ◆ it is only at commuting time; patterns are likely to be very different at other times
- ◆ we have no idea if people who tend to cycle to work (or who use other means) tend also to be in jobs where you are more likely (or less likely) now to be working at home, or redundant.

8. Abandoned bikes

We have long pressed the Council for a clear and publicised route to report abandoned bikes, particularly those on the public onstreet racks. At last a procedure has been set up. It is due to be added to the Council website in the near future, but the basics are that you send the following information to streetenforcement@edinburgh.gov.uk

- ◆ Description of the bike (make, colour, any defects)
- ◆ Exact location
- ◆ A photograph of the bike

Reports may not be dealt with unless all these details are sent, so if you wish to send in reports you need to have a smartphone or camera with you.

We understand that recovered bikes in repairable condition will be passed on to [Brake the Cycle](#), a council-supported scheme where young offenders get trained in bike mechanics, and the bikes are then supplied to community organisations, schools etc. [Currently](#) they also go to key workers and isolated people. We are not sure what happens to unrepairable bikes – it may be the Council recycling centres.

9. Active Advent Calendar & Competitions

Full details: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/edinburghactiveadvent

Edinburgh Council has created an '**Active Advent**' calendar with suggested cycling and walking activities for every day of December up to the 24th. Yes, they have some imagination!!

There are also **competitions** on selected days, starting December 1st.

Post a picture on specified themes, using the hashtags #EdinburghActiveAdvent *and* #ActiveTravelChampions. Then send the picture and a screenshot of the social media post to Edinburghworkplaces@stantec.com (or just the picture if not on social media).

December 1st theme is the best picture of visited Christmas lights. We suggest you try to include your bike in the picture to prove you got there actively!

Finally, Just Eat will be offering **30 mins of free bike hire** on the three weekends leading up to Christmas – and they too are planning a competition #SantaCycles – we don't yet have the details.

Workplaces

If you're interested in publicising the Active Advent Calendar and events at your workplace, please email edinburghworkplaces@stantec.com and they will be happy to give you some help and ideas.

Incidentally, remember if several people cycle (or would like to) at your workplace, you can buy 6 or more Spokes maps at £4.60 each instead of the usual £6.95; then re-sell them to colleagues at the cheap price, or to raise cash for a local good cause. Details here www.spokes.org.uk/spokes-maps/#Bulk. We have had orders for as many as 70 maps from one workplace!

10. Spokes Edinburgh map - graphics help needed

Thanks everyone who volunteered to help as a 'shops hustler' for Spokes maps – we had a great response!

Here are two remaining needs, though they both quite specific so it'll be luck whether anyone can help.

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.
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.



11. Scottish Government consultations

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

- ◆ [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.
 - Cycling UK has drawn up a briefing document which is very useful if you wish to go into this in detail www.cyclinguk.org/blog/help-make-our-roads-safer-scotlands-road-safety-framework
- ◆ [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."*

12. Consultations – **Check council, government & 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, includes (see above for more info)....
 - *Scotland Road Safety Framework*
 - *Cleaner Air for Scotland*
- ◆ **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!)

13. 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.