

Spokes Action-Update 10 July 2021

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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. Future of Spaces for People (SfP) looks positive, so far

If you emailed your councillors following our [June Action-Update](#), thank you! The Council voted to take the next steps in a lengthy legal process towards, hopefully, making most of the schemes permanent - with modifications and improvements in the light of past and future experience and comments received.

However, the decision was very tight, and we understand there was a great deal of debate within the two Coalition parties (SNP and Labour), with differing views from different councillors, before both parties agreed. *Emails to councillors from individual voters such as yourself may have made all the difference.* Some councillors had been unhappy about keeping most schemes, and indeed the initial decision at the Transport Committee was to scrap the lengthy Lanark Road protected cycle routes.

An intensive campaign of [lobbying](#) and [protest](#) over the following week, led by the new [BEST](#) coalition of local groups from around the city, of which Spokes is a member, resulted in a change of heart on Lanark Road at the Full Council meeting. The final decision, by [26 votes to 20](#) was to progress to the next stage for all the main road cycle schemes, the school safety schemes and the traffic-reduced areas; although sadly most of the town centre scheme measures are to go.

There was wide praise for a Spokes deputation by Caroline Brown and David French at the Transport Committee – the written version is [here](#). There are also twitter threads of interesting points from the [Transport Committee](#) and the [Full Council](#) meetings.

For more background, see the documents in the 'Consultation' section [here](#).

What happens next?

- (a) Most SfP schemes are currently based on TTRO (temporary Traffic Regulation Orders) which have to be justified through a danger to the public – in this case the pandemic.
- (b) The TTROs lose their validity once the danger ends, so the Council plans to move the schemes to ETROs (Experimental TRO). This must be done fairly soon, given the continuing relaxations in Covid rules.
- (c) The Council is currently scrutinising each scheme, in the light of experience and the comments received in the [consultation](#) earlier this year – major changes are unlikely at this stage. The proposals in the ETROs will be based on the current layouts, together with any changes from this scrutiny.
- (d) Before an ETRO can commence there must (legally) for each scheme be a 'stakeholder' consultation (which includes Spokes), followed by a public consultation for comment and objections. The public consultation is likely perhaps in August (this is guesswork) – we will try to advise members, so you can comment, but given the number of schemes likely to be consulted in a fairly short period there may be a big pressure on our time. We imagine they will be on the Council's [consultation web pages](#).
- (e) The ETRO then goes to the Transport Committee, likely in late autumn – legally they are able to reject any objections which remain at that stage. If approved by the Committee, the ETRO then commences.
- (f) During the 18-month course of the ETRO the Council can modify the scheme on the basis of experience. If they wish to make it permanent (with or without further modifications) they then have to begin the legal processes for that – which involve further consultation and opportunities for objection, but this time unwithdrawn objections have to be referred to the Scottish Government for decision.



What you can do

- If the above sounds ridiculously bureaucratic, with multiple consultations, it is! After much pressure the government is consulting on simplifying the rules (they are much simpler in England and Wales). You can respond to the government consultation on Traffic Order regulations – see (3) below
- The main public consultations on Edinburgh's SfP ETROs are those in (d) above, so look out for that in the coming weeks, and do respond at that stage
- As explained in (c), the council is currently looking at all schemes to decide what will be included in the ETROs. There is no official public consultation at this stage. However, **if there is anything that particularly concerns you in any existing scheme**, we suggest you email one or two of your more sympathetic councillors *soon* and ask them to see if your point can be incorporated in the ETRO plans for that scheme.
- **Broughton Street & Morningside Road uphill cycle lanes.** The decision on these two important lanes was unclear because they are counted as part of 'town centre' schemes, most elements of which are to go. *If either concerns you, please email your councillors urgently*, explain why this matters to you, and ask them to try to ensure they are retained.



Morningside Rd

John Robson

2. Bicycle Film Festival, July 16-25

Edinburgh Festival of Cycling [EdFoC] has teamed up for a second time with the [International Bicycle Film Festival](#) – now coming to Edinburgh (virtually) July 16-25, and also supported by Spokes.

At any time during the Festival, you can stream a great 90-minute film collection curated by the International Festival. It takes you on a journey around the world, from a range of directors and in a wide range of styles. Here is the [Edinburgh trailer](#).

The full 90-minute film includes...

- A brief history of the bicycle
- Cycling as a response to knife crime epidemic in London
- Love between a father and young BMX-rider son (producer: LeBron James)
- The incredibly stunning and thrilling view of the annual Tour De Rwanda
- The story of Julian Molina, the beloved, full-throttle one-legged cyclist
- Access to education for young female students in Kenya through bicycles
- First female BMX competition at a major sporting event
- and more!



BFF has been celebrating bicycles through art, film and music for the last 20 years and has an incredible history of working with top artists, film-makers, venues, and institutions around the world. The physical BFF spanned the world in over 90 cities to an audience of over one million people, and for 2021 is continuing in virtual form.

How the virtual Film Festival works

A ticket allows you to view the 90-minute film package at any time during the period July 16 – 25, 2021, streamed to your computer, tablet, or smart TV by simply clicking on the link provided by email. You can view the content in one sitting, or at your leisure, from your own home.

There are 3 ticket prices, *all of which provide exactly the same content*, but the middle and higher prices enable you to give extra support to both EdFoC and to the international film festival. It is completely up to you which price ticket you choose.

The basic ticket is \$10 (plus a small fee), which at present is very roughly £9 including the fee. To give extra support to EdFoC and BFF there are tickets at \$15 or \$20 (plus small fee).

Buy your tickets [HERE](#)

Help publicise the Festival by retweeting [our tweet](#)

3. Scottish Government consultations

Holyrood elections always mean a month or two when many aspects of government, including consultations, cease until the next government is in place and decides what they want to do. So now we have a glut!

3.1 Traffic Regulation Order Review consultation – ends 30 July [Consultation page](#) [Draft Spokes response](#)

This is the consultation on simplifying procedures, which is mentioned in (1) above.

We must admit that the whole thing is rather 'nerdy' and many people won't want to learn all the ins and outs! – though the consultation website makes a pretty good attempt to explain things in reasonably everyday language. However, the thing to remember is that the existing processes need changed for reasons like these ...

- they caused a *literally* two year delay to the Council's flagship CCWEL west-east cycleroute project (see dates in letter pictured below), resulting in increased costs and modifications to achieve savings
- they are making it ridiculously complex for Councils to make successful SfP schemes permanent ((1) above).

Therefore it is vital that the regulations are simplified, whilst of course still retaining the need for full public consultation and the opportunity for comments and objections.

Spokes is responding by email, as we are making [a detailed response](#). However, unless the nerdiness appeals to you, we suggest you use the online QA at the above link, rather than responding by email.

- Most of the questions are yes/no or agree/disagree. You will probably find the answers to these fairly obvious, but you can see what our draft response says above
- There are 3 open-ended questions (7,8,11). If you are in a hurry, you can even leave these blank. If you have a bit more time, check out our draft responses. The government could make the changes we suggest in Q8 & Q11 very quickly, though our main Q7 point would have to wait for a new Transport Act.
- In **Q7**, our main point is that 18 months is too short to allow proper trialling of a scheme, including testing modifications made during the course of the experiment.
- **Q8** tackles the cause of the CCWEL 2-year delay. We believe local Councils should have the power to make local decisions on things like loading restrictions, rather than objections having to be referred to the government.
- **Q11** is also important, and refers to another type of Order, Redetermination Orders (RSOs), which again mean that objections on the most minor of aspects have to be sent to government for a decision instead of being taken locally – this was another factor in the CCWEL 2-year delay. In England and Wales there are no RSO regulations at all – councils are able to make these decisions for themselves.

Roads Directorate

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Ewan Kennedy
Services Manager – Transport Networks
Place Development
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Waverley Court
4 East Market Street
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Your ref:
CMcC
Our ref:
A27261548
Date:
29 July 2020

Dear Mr Kennedy,

THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL (CALTON ROAD, GREENSIDE ROW, LEITH STREET AND WATERLOO PLACE, EDINBURGH) (REDETERMINATION OF MEANS OF EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHT OF PASSAGE) ORDER 201_RSO/17/13

1. I refer to the letter dated 1 August 2018 from your Council remitting the above Redetermination Order to the Scottish Ministers for determination and to subsequent correspondence.
2. Following careful consideration of all of the evidence available, including the objections to the draft Order, the Council's responses to those objections and the Report to Scottish Ministers from the Planning and Environmental Appeals Division (DPEA), the Scottish Ministers have determined the matter and confirm the Order without modification.

Background

CCWEL delayed for literally two years whilst Scottish Government decides the objectors have no case

3.2 Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) consultation – ends 6 September [Consultation page & survey](#).

This is another slightly nerdy one, but it includes several questions relating to public health and environment, so please consider responding to the questions you find relevant – we suggest some, overleaf.

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 gives Councils the power, if they so choose, to introduce workplace parking levies (in practice only the cities are likely to consider doing so). A WPL means the Council charges employers a periodic levy for all staff parking spaces over a certain minimum number (there are exceptions such as spaces for blue badge holders).

Such a scheme has been in place in Nottingham, England, for years, and has raised £m's for public and active travel schemes, whilst the city has remained an attractive place for business and investment. Incidentally, Spokes (and others) had argued the levy should also cover customer spaces at large sites such as out of town shopping centres, but the Scottish Government rejected this.

The government is now consulting on the rules which Councils will have to follow to implement a WPL. Spokes has not yet prepared our response, but some questions you might like to answer are below, with suggestions...

Q2: who should be consulted on a WPL proposal?

- Groups representing those likely to benefit from an environment with fewer cars and better active/public transport should be consulted, not just those who will have to pay the levy

Q13: impacts of the WPL on certain groups in terms of equalities

- Whilst the rules must ensure certain groups, such as disabled or children, are not unfairly disadvantaged, this question also needs to take into account the *benefits* of the scheme for such groups – for example an environment with fewer cars and better active/public transport

Q14: impact on businesses

Although businesses will have to pay the levy, there are also some potential advantages for them, including...

- legally the levy must be used by councils for transport improvements, particularly public & active travel
- businesses will benefit from car-reduced cities, so reducing delays to delivery vans etc
- businesses will be encouraged to re-think use of their parking spaces, so as to reduce their levy. Space in cities is often very valuable for redevelopments or even for renting out to other businesses.

Q16: impact on the environment

Obvious benefits in reduction of car use, reduced climate and toxic emissions

Q17: other comments

Next time there is a suitable legislative opportunity, the WPL law should be widened to also include a levy on customer car spaces at large car-based retail and leisure outlets. As with WPL, this wider '*premises levy*' should be levied on the business, who can then choose whether to pass on some/all to customers – and/or to react in other ways such as incentives to use public or active travel to the site, thus reducing the number of spaces needed.

3.3 Scottish Government budget for 2022/23 – ends 13 August [Consultation web page](#)

The Scottish Parliament's Finance Committee is running a pre-budget consultation, and are particularly interested in covid-related aspects. The draft budget itself has not yet been published, but this consultation might influence what is in it; and will certainly influence how it is scrutinised when it is published.

Spokes has not yet drawn up a draft response, but points to consider in your own response include...

- Ensuring there are resources [to build on the Spaces for People work](#). Whilst SfP was introduced for covid-related reasons, it also supports in a big way other government objectives on active travel, climate and public health. The government itself has said this – but it must ensure the resources are there
- The Scottish Government has set a bold target to cut car-km 20% by 2030. This will be very difficult to achieve [see 2(b) [here](#)]. It will require measures to boost active travel (as above) and public transport. But it will also require an end to the £100m's spent on trunk road expansion: the budget should redirect that investment into cities, towns and villages – a better way to assist covid recovery!

For these reasons, top politicians have said that successful SfP schemes should be made permanent rather than being scrapped if and when the need for social distancing ends [see [this article](#) for links]. Such comments range right across political parties at the Scottish Parliament, from the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, **Michael Matheson MSP**, through to Conservative Transport spokesperson, **Graham Simpson MSP**. Albeit that some [local politicians](#) disagree about making schemes permanent.

More formally, the government's [Strategic Transport Projects Review](#) [STPR2] states, "*making these (SfP schemes) permanent where successful is the next key step in .. roadspace .. allocation & supporting active travel*"



Scottish Government wants successful SfP schemes made permanent - will they ensure the resources?

www.spokes.org.uk/2021/05/growing-edinburghs-cycle-network-beyond-spaces-for-people/

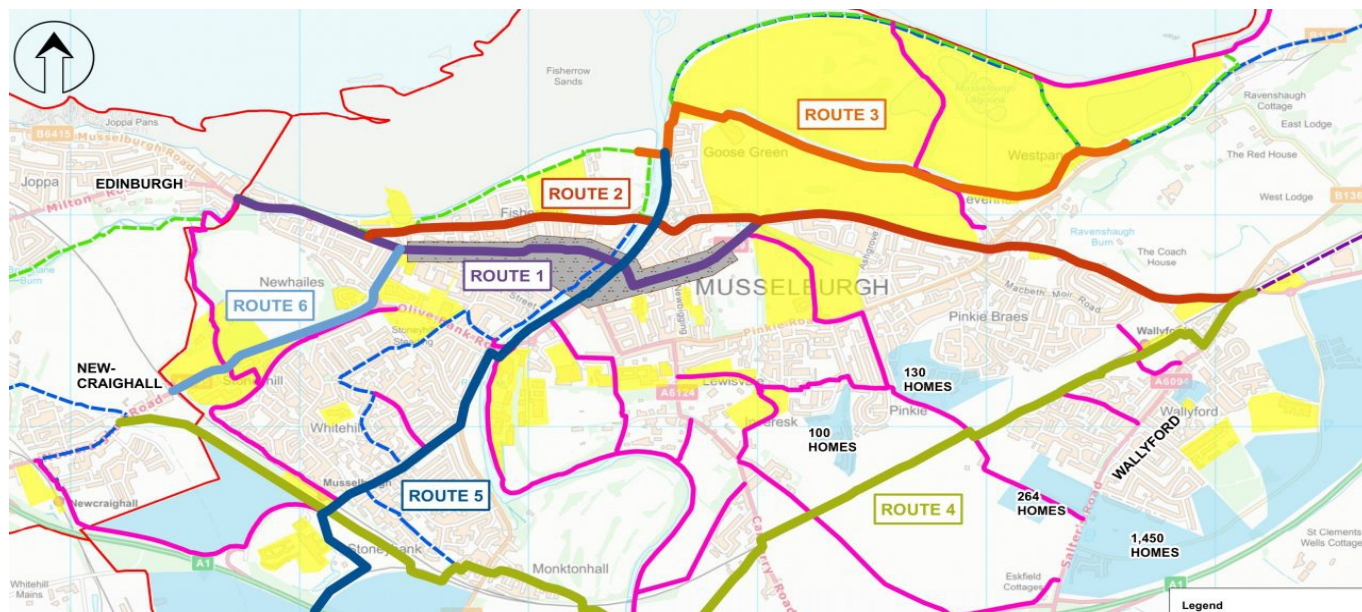
4. Edinburgh/Lothians area consultations

Please respond to any of the consultations below which cover areas where you live, work or visit. If you respond by email, please send us a copy - otherwise please let us have any main concerns or thoughts which you'd like considered for possible inclusion in the official Spokes responses. You may also wish to send your thoughts to your local councillors, and ask them to support you in their own comments.

4.1 Musselburgh Active Toun – ends 16 July Consultation website ... musselburghactivetoun.info

"The 2018 Musselburgh Active Travel Network Masterplan proposed a network of strategic active travel routes, and three of these are currently being taken forward by East Lothian Council to the Concept Design stage. The routes will connect key attractors within Musselburgh and provide greater accessibility between Musselburgh Town Centre and surrounding communities. The project has been awarded funding through the Places for Everyone scheme, funded by the Scottish Government through Transport Scotland and administered by Sustrans."

A Spokes draft response is not yet available. As regards Routes 1 and 2, the consultation gives options for either a bidirectional lane on one side of the road or two unidirectional lanes. Normally we would prefer the latter, but in this case are finding it difficult to come to a conclusion. The fact that there are very few entries on one side of the road supports the bidirectional option. However, that would mean Edinburgh-bound cyclists facing oncoming 30mph motor traffic only a few feet away on the left – the width and design of the buffer zone is not discussed. Depending on dimensions and design this could be scary – and could lead to glare from headlights in the dark.



4.2 Holyrood Park Road Network – ends 30 September Consultation website

NB – although within Edinburgh, this is a Historic Environment Scotland consultation, as they operate the park.

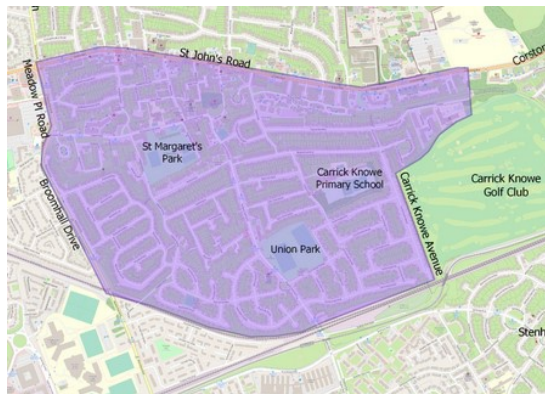
The consultation seeks your views on road closures in the Park. Before responding, we recommend reading the following...

- ◆ These Car Free Holyrood blog articles
 - [Road casualties in Holyrood Park](#) Note that in the last 5 years, 15 of the 30 reported casualties on Park roads have been cyclists – i.e. 50%, compared to the national average of 7.5%
 - [Inclusive and Equitable Access in Holyrood Park](#) – Parts 1 & 2
- ◆ [Tweet thread about the consultation](#) by Andrew White

4.3 Leith Connections & Corstorphine Connections - LTNs – **ends 11 July** [Consultation website](#)

If you live in or visit either of these areas, please respond to the consultation. We mentioned these consultations in the previous Action-Update, but the Spokes responses are now available, so may be of interest if you have not yet sent in your own response. The Spokes responses are here...

- ◆ [Corstorphine Connections](#)
- ◆ [Leith Connections](#)



'Corstorphine Connections' - proposed LTN area, bounded by St. Johns Rd, Pinkhill/ Carrick Knowe Av, Stenhouse Drive & Meadow Place Rd



'Leith Connections' - proposed LTN area, bounded by Salamander St, Commercial St, North & Gt Junction St, Duke St and the roads south of Leith Links

4.4 Edinburgh Council Draft 2030 Climate Strategy – **ends 12 September** [Consultation website](#)

"The draft strategy outlines how we will work with citizens, communities and public, private and third sector organisations across the city to deliver a net zero, climate ready Capital by 2030."

With the recent Edinburgh flooding (let alone far greater disasters in other parts of the world) this consultation is very appropriate .

Spokes has not yet started on our response – we welcome comments – or volunteers to do a first draft!

The Council is also running online workshops/QA sessions, open to all, on July 20 (7-9), Aug 14 (11-1), Sep 2 (9-11)

More details and free registration from the above consultation web page.



4.5 Edinburgh Council Low Emission Zone – **ends 20 September** [Consultation website](#)

"The City of Edinburgh Council aims to reduce air pollution, since it presents a significant threat to public health. It is especially harmful to young children, the elderly and those suffering from pre-existing conditions, including heart and lung diseases."

Low Emission Zones (LEZs) are being introduced across Scotland's four largest cities: Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee in response to dangerous levels of air pollution, primarily nitrogen dioxide (NO2), generated by road traffic. LEZs aspire to improve public health by discouraging the most polluting vehicles from entering an area. If a vehicle entering a LEZ does not meet the minimum exhaust emission standard, then a penalty fine is issued. The Zone is intended to only target the most polluting vehicles."

As with 4.4, Spokes has not yet started on a response – we welcome comments – or volunteers to do a first draft!

One big concern is that the proposed LEZ boundary is only around a small very central area. This may result in additional traffic, particularly polluting vehicles, taking roads round the edges of the zone – e.g. [Holyrood Park](#).

Friends of the Earth Scotland is campaigning for [tougher LEZs](#) in the four cities above.

5. Philanthropist wanted!!

In 2019/2020, thanks to a kind surprise donation from a charitable trust, Spokes was able to offer grants of up to £1500 to Spokes member households towards the cost of a cargo bike (new e-cargo-bikes usually cost £5000+). This trust has an environmental outlook and their wish was to see more cargo bikes on Edinburgh's streets.

A couple of pictures are shown, and more pictures and reports are on our website [here](#) (also pictures/reports from the separate grants that we offer to community organisations).

We'd like to offer another round of grants to Spokes member households (including anyone who joins) but the above charitable trust is now directing all its grants to covid-related work, so cannot provide another donation. We feel it would be inappropriate to devote ordinary Spokes funds to this purpose, so this article is just on the off chance that a philanthropically-minded Spokes member would like to donate say £5K-£10K for a household cargo-bike support offer (If the full sum not claimed, any excess would go to our cargo bike support for community groups).

Please contact Spokes if you would like to help and are able to do so.



2020: £1117, Eddie & Vicki's Helios tandem with cargo conversion kit fitted [\[report\]](#)



2020: £1500, Josie & family Urban Arrow cargobike [\[report\]](#)

6. COP26 International Climate Conference

Glasgow November 2021

- ◆ **Official website** ukcop26.org
- ◆ **Climate Fringe** Environmental and social justice organisations across Scotland are preparing, including through events, lobbying, documents, workshops and more. See <https://climatefringe.org/>
- ◆ **Edinburgh Climate Commission** This is a powerful independent group, including the Council, universities and businesses, working "to accelerate climate action and impact in Edinburgh." edinburghclimate.org.uk
- ◆ **COP26 accommodation needed** Can you offer accommodation to a climate campaigner who comes to Scotland for COP26? Spaces throughout the central belt, including Edinburgh, are needed. Even a floor or sofa may help, if spaces become very tight. A modest charge to cover costs is acceptable. Details here... www.jubileescotland.org.uk/become-a-host-for-the-cop26-homestay-network



7. More and future consultations – *Check council, government & other consultations*

- ◆ **Edinburgh** consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk
- ◆ **Edinburgh** [Edinburgh traffic orders](https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/traffic-orders)
- ◆ **East Lothian** www.eastlothianconsultations.co.uk
- ◆ **Midlothian** <https://www.midlothian.gov.uk/directory/33/consultations>
- ◆ **West Lothian** www.westlothian.gov.uk/consultations
- ◆ **Scottish Government** consult.gov.scot
- ◆ **Transport Scotland** www.transport.gov.scot/consultations
- ◆ **Scottish Parliament** yourviews.parliament.scot/consultation_finder
- ◆ **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!)

8. Keeping in touch

- ★ Remember to check out our **website** every so often www.spokes.org.uk
- ★ We are active on **Twitter** [@SpokesLothian](https://twitter.com/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.