

Spokes Action-Update 16 September 2021

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0. Finding your councillors

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

1. Spokes Public Meeting, Weds 22 Sept online ... *Local Bike Campaigning*

There's a flourishing of locally-based campaigns for cycling infrastructure and wider car-reduced living, supporting walking, wheeling, local public transport and places no longer dominated by the demands of the car.

Our meeting, at 7.30pm on **Weds 22 September**, hears from a range of local campaigns, together with city-wide groups BEST and Spokes, and is followed by our usual fulsome QA. We'll hear how and why groups started, the challenges, the successes and what comes next. We hope it will give *you* some ideas too!

The new campaigns have a range of local and wider motivations, but all come under a general theme of developing places and ways of getting around that are less car-dominated, safer, healthier, more climate-friendly. For example, fighting for a specific cyclistroute, lobbying for a wide low-traffic neighbourhood, bike buses for safer school travel, or banning motor traffic from inappropriate locations such as Holyrood Park.

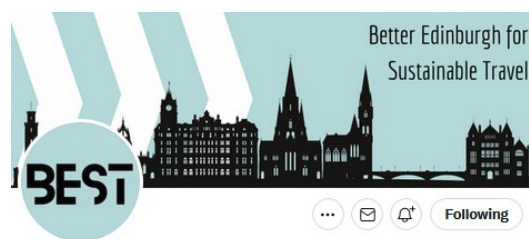
Some groups form initially to support a welcome traffic proposal, or oppose an unwelcome one. Some because an individual feel passionately that their area needs to counter the insidious growth in number, size and dominance of motor traffic on their local streets. Government allows public space to be changed in this way with zero public consultation, whereas measures to restrain the car do (rightly) have to be consulted on ... it feels unfair.

At the meeting, the following groups will speak for 5 mins each on how and why they started, the challenges, successes, what they have learned and what next...

- **Sarah Gowanlock:** [Better Edinburgh for Sustainable Transport](#). Whilst Spokes is very supportive of all active travel and public transport, our primary work is on cycling, whereas BEST has a wider 'safer streets' remit from the outset. We're good friends! Spokes is also Lothians-wide, whereas BEST is Edinburgh only.
- **Sarah Gowanlock:** [Car-Free Holyrood Park](#)
- **Kirsty Lewin:** [Spokes Portobello](#)
- **Jenni McGrouther:** [Sciennes Primary Bike Bus](#)
- **Iain Monk:** [Drem/Gullane Path Campaign](#)
- **Sasha Taylor** – [SW20](#) (S.W. Ed 20-minute neighbourhoods)
- **David French:** [Spokes Planning Group](#)
- **Our 45-minute QA session** will then be chaired by **Alix Davies**. Alix is Secretariat of [Edinburgh Climate Commission](#) and is experienced in organisational change
- **Questions** can be submitted *in advance* by emailing spokes@spokes.org.uk with subject line *Spokes meeting question*. To submit questions *during the meeting*, use the questions box in the webinar's Control Panel.

How to take part

- **Register by clicking [here](#) ... register now, in advance, to avoid hassles on the night**
- **Full details** in our website article ... www.spokes.org.uk/2021/09/local-bike-campaigning
- **Help publicise the meeting** by retweeting [our tweet](#) and/or liking our [facebook post](#).



2. Spokes Spaces for People challenge

We've not had many entries for our challenge, but the ones we've received are lovely! So we've decided to continue the challenge till the end of the year.

To inspire you, we print a few extracts from entries below (it's optional for your photos to include a mugshot!)

Enter the challenge to win a Spokes Buff or a Spokes map of your choice – or both. You will need to visit either 3 or 4 Spaces for People locations, each in different parts of Edinburgh or the Lothians, and send us a photo and a few constructive comments on each.

This is a challenge, not a competition, so everyone who enters wins, providing you follow the rules.

The challenge helps to publicise SfP schemes and helps us get feedback on them, so please tell your friends, relations, colleagues. We only accept one entry per household.

Full details, rules, and entry pro-forma here... www.spokes.org.uk/2021/07/summer-sfp-challenge



Comments on the schemes you visited

- Comments can be as long as you like, but at least 25 words. They must be constructive, for example *what you liked* and/or *what needs improved or changed*
- Remember also to attach a photo to your email for each of your schemes

[1] EL1 Musselburgh Electric Bridge

Home turf for me this one! The bridge has been a great addition to the cycling network and is widely used. It's largely eliminated conflict between cyclists and pedestrians using the footbridge. Sometimes the blocks (which are presumably there to stop cars using it) are badly positioned making it almost single-file which is ridiculous given the width of the bridge. If it becomes permanent I hope they just use bollards instead.

[2] W4 Lanark Road

The segregation here is very welcome particularly on the uphill section. This route provides a direct route in and out of town and being relatively wide and straight it's well-suited to a segregated cycle lane in my opinion. The surface isn't fantastic though- if by some miracle they were to put in more permanent infrastructure in place here I'd hope they resurface the road first. The downhill section in particular is a bit of a rollercoaster.

[3] S4 Gilmerton Road

A mixture of permanent and temporary SfP infrastructure. The permanent fixtures are all of a good standard and the road surface is (by Edinburgh standards) immaculate. The temporary sections are a mixed bag and there are sections where there is no protection. Ironically on the day I surveyed this I got both a close pass and then a left hook from a number 8 bus on one of the sections where there is no protection!

Of course, even if you don't enter, you can still get [Spokes Maps](#) and a [Spokes Buff](#) from shops or direct.

3. Scotland Programme for Government

The Scottish Government has just published its Programme for Government, covering next year and also up to the next election. The Programme confirms the huge rise in active travel cash in recent the Green/SNP agreement, and reaffirms the incredibly tough target to reduce car-km 20% by 2030.

Whilst Spokes greatly welcomes these commitments, we have serious concerns about the political will to ensure effective and timeous implementation, including...

- Using the new cash effectively will need urgent action to rationalise Traffic Regulation Order rules, tough action on roadspace re-allocation and upskilling of transport staff and consultancies across Scotland
- The government so far seems unwilling to adopt the kind of policies which will give it any hope at all of achieving the 2030 traffic reduction target.

See our [full article](#) on this, and how you can help.



4. Spaces for People – medics letter

An [open letter](#) supporting the retention and further development of Spaces for People projects has been sent to all Councillors, signed by an incredible 140 Edinburgh medical professionals, many in very senior posts.

The medics say the changes are potentially life-saving and have the twin benefits of improving public health and mitigating the climate emergency.

The letter says (in part) ...

“As health professionals, we have a responsibility to protect and promote the health of the population. We have a responsibility to address inequalities and to advocate for the needs of the most deprived and disadvantaged members of the population we serve.

“We are concerned about the impact of the climate crisis on health, globally and locally.

“We support the retention, and further development and integration of infrastructures designed to support active travel and clean air for the whole population of Edinburgh, to mitigate inequalities in health, local mobility, and air quality. We are concerned that suggested steps to reverse active travel measures introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic would be a retrograde and harmful step for the health of the population of Edinburgh.”

The letter was prepared by Dr Laura McWhirter, who is Consultant Neuropsychiatrist at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and Clinical Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh. Also, we are proud to say, a Spokes member!

Opposite is the start of signatures – surnames A to D. See end of the [letter](#) for the full list.

SfP future [now called by the Council, 'Travelling Safely']

At its 19.8.21 meeting, the Council's Transport Committee [decided](#) to move to the next phase of making permanent virtually all the main-road cycle schemes. Spokes had a [deputation](#) jointly with BEST.

Due to the Scottish Government's dysfunctional Traffic Order Regulations (for which the long-promised review is still not complete) making the schemes permanent is very tortuous – see article [here](#), especially appendix 3. It will require for each scheme an Experimental Traffic Order (ETRO) followed by a normal TRO. In addition to the public consultation already undertaken, each of these 50 or so schemes will therefore require two further public consultations. We hope people will understand that the blame for this excess bureaucracy lies with the Scottish Government rather than the Council! The first set of consultations is expected in October.

Apart from the Council's major excellent decision to retain nearly all the 40km of segregated lanes (and, in the longer term, improve them) there were several serious disappointments at the Committee, including...

- Virtually all the 'town centre' schemes will go – this is largely the footway widenings and also includes, for example, the much-valued uphill cycle lane on Morningside Road
- The George IV Bridge/ Forrester Road schemes goes – this is because the forthcoming legal orders for the permanent Meadows-George Street scheme are out shortly, and an Order for the existing scheme is apparently not possible at the same time – hence the existing scheme can't remain until construction starts. Yet another Traffic Order problem!!

For more documents on the future of SfP schemes, and the 19.8.21 meeting, see paras 2108 [here](#).

Yours sincerely,

Dr Laura McWhirter, Consultant Neuropsychiatrist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh; Clinical Research Fellow, University of Edinburgh

Neil Aitken, Physiotherapist, Neil Aitken Physiotherapy Ltd, Edinburgh

Dr Niall H. Anderson, Senior Lecturer in Medical Statistics, Usher Institute, University of Edinburgh

Dr Ross Archibald, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, NHS Lothian

Dr Erika Aspinall, General Practitioner, NHS Lothian

Dr Katherine Atkins, Chancellor's Fellow, Edinburgh Medical School, University of Edinburgh

Dr Paul Bailey, General Practitioner, NHS Lothian

Miss Emily Baird, Consultant, Children's Orthopaedics, Royal Hospital for Children and Young People Edinburgh

Dr Kasia Banas, UG Talent Lead and Programme Director in Data-Driven Innovation for Health and Social Care, Usher Institute, University of Edinburgh

Dr Ravneet Batra, Consultant Liaison Psychiatrist, Regional Infectious Diseases Unit, Western General Hospital

Dr Roland Baumann, General Practitioner, Niddrie Medical Practice, Edinburgh

Dr Craig Beattie, Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Monika Beatty, Consultant in Critical Care, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Sam Bennett, Foundation Doctor, Acute Medicine, Western General Hospital

Ms Katherine Bethell, Advanced Nurse Practitioner and Programme Manager, Chalmers Sexual Health Centre (Lothian) and Sandyford Centre (GGC)

Dr David Birrell, Emergency medicine trainee, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh; Honorary Clinical Fellow, University of Edinburgh

Professor James Boardman, Professor of Neonatal Medicine, University of Edinburgh

Dr Friederike Boellert, Respiratory Consultant, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh

Dr Kirsty Boyd, Reader in Palliative Care, Usher Institute, University of Edinburgh

Dr Tom Bloomfield, Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Mr Paul Brennan, Reader and Honorary Consultant Neurosurgeon, University of Edinburgh and NHS Lothian

Mr Iain Brown, Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr John Budd, General Practitioner, Edinburgh Access Practice, and Co-ordinator of Lothian Deprivation Interest Group

Dr Rosamunde Burns, Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Peter Cairns, General Practitioner, Wester Hailes Medical Practice

Professor Alan Carson, Consultant Neuropsychiatrist, University of Edinburgh

Dr Simon Chillingworth, Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Professor Richard Chin, Professor of Paediatric Neurology and Clinical Epidemiology, Honorary Consultant Paediatric Neurologist, University of Edinburgh and The Royal Hospital for Children and Young People

Dr Sarah Clay, Locum General Practitioner, Niddrie Medical Practice, and Specialty Doctor in Palliative Care

Dr Elizabeth Cole, Anaesthetics registrar, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Catherine Collinson, Consultant Anaesthetist, Department of Anaesthesia, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Claire Cooke-Jones, Trainee Anaesthetist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Robert Cooke-Jones, Trainee General Practitioner, Inchpark Surgery, Edinburgh

Dr Nadine Cossette, Consultant Liaison Psychiatrist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Helen Creedon, Clinical Fellow in Oncology, University of Edinburgh

Dr Julia Critchley, Consultant Anaesthetist, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

Dr Craig Davidson, Consultant in Emergency Medicine, NHS Lothian

Professor Adrian Davis, Professor of Transport & Health, Edinburgh Napier University

Dr Christopher Dickens, General Practitioner, Edinburgh

Ms Lynsey Downie, Anaesthesia Associate, Edinburgh Royal Infirmary

Mr Andrew Duckworth, Senior Lecturer and Consultant Orthopaedic Trauma Surgeon, Edinburgh Orthopaedics and University of Edinburgh

Mr Joseph Duncumb, Orthopaedic Surgery Registrar, Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh

5. Spylaw Park cargo-bike event

If you're interested in cargo bikes – whether for child transport or any other purpose, this should be a great event. Come along and see (and try) a variety of different models. Sunday 26 September, 10am-3pm.

We understand that the event will include entertainment for children. Also, Scotland's Active Travel Commissioner Lee Craigie intends to come along at some point, and the event may well grow further.

We are planning a Spokes stall (hopefully with cargobike) at the event. If you can help at the stall for some of the time (or even all) please get in touch ASAP (email mknottenbelt1@gmail.com)

Remember too that Spokes offers grants to *community organisations* towards the cost of a cargo bike. Details at www.spokes.org.uk/documents/advice/cargo-bikes.

We are occasionally also able to offer grants to *households*, but this depends on our finding a trust or philanthropist willing to support these grants – we don't have any such funds for household grants at present.

WHAT DOES YOUR SCHOOL RUN LOOK LIKE?

If you've ever wondered how to make 'The School Run' more fun, efficient, and sustainable for you and the kids, then this event is for you!

Try out a range of bikes fit for the family commute, such as:

cargo bikes, trailers, adapted child seats, and more!



Spylaw Park
Sunday, 26th September
10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Get support from experts such as; Cargo Bike Movement, The Bike Station, Laid Back Bikes, Edinburgh Festival of Cycling, and more...

email: cargobikemovement@gmail.com for more information

Supported by:



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 climatefringe.org
- ◆ **Volunteering at COP26** climatefringe.org/cop26-volunteering There are big volunteering opportunities for people who can be in Glasgow during all or part of the Conference
- ◆ **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
- ◆ **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
- ◆ **Pedal on Parliament** is organising a **Pedal on COP** on Nov 6, including a [mass feeder ride from Edinburgh](#)
"We couldn't pedal on Parliament this year — but we can take our cycles and climate message to the assembled world leaders in Glasgow. The UN Climate Conference is the world's last best chance to avert a climate catastrophe and we're joining with other groups for the [Global Day of Action for Climate Justice](#) on November 6th."

See also this superb PoP/COP video...

<https://youtu.be/gnXOs0AGu6E>



PEDAL ON COP26

EDINBURGH → GLASGOW
SATURDAY 6TH NOVEMBER

WE ARE IN A CLIMATE EMERGENCY. CYCLING CAN BE A HUGE PART OF THE ANSWER. JOIN US ON A MASS RIDE TO COP26 TO DEMAND URGENT ACTION.



THIS MACHINE FIGHTS CLIMATE CHANGE
Starting early at Mid. Meadow Walk (time TBC)
Sign-up at PedalOnParliament.org
#PedalOnCOP26 @EdCriticalMass

7. 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 know of any main concerns or thoughts which you'd like considered for possible inclusion in official Spokes responses. You could also send your points to your local councillors (section 0 above) and ask them to support you in their own comments.

7.1 SEStran Strategic Cycle Network, Livingston-Addiewell section – *closing date soon?*

[SEStran](#), the South East Scotland Transport Partnership (not to be confused with Sustrans) has drawn up plans for a 'strategic, cross-boundary' cycle network linking the Councils in the area, and building on existing routes and proposals. There is currently a consultation on plans for the Livingston-Addiewell section; we do not know the closing date, but it may be soon.

There is a fancy online 'virtual engagement room' at which you can see the whole SEStran strategic map and comment on the proposals for Livingston-Addiewell. sestran-west-lothian.virtual-engage.com To see the various 'info boards' in the exhibition, click the right or left arrows at the bottom of the page. To read any board, hover over the logo at the top of the board, then click on the drop-down window that appears. When you click on one of the boards (called Next Steps) you will get a short QA about Livingston-Addiewell, assuming the consultation has not yet closed.

For more info, or to comment by email contact Jamie.Smith@arup.com

7.2 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

7.3 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.

8. ScotRail timetable consultation – *closes 1 October*

ScotRail is consulting on a proposed timetable from May 2022. Covid has meant a massive financial crisis, with passenger numbers plummeting for many months, and still way below the old normal. Moreover there are signs that future travel patterns may change, with reduced peak traffic but more passengers for leisure and off-peak.

The new timetable tries to adapt to such factors. It includes a number of changes in routes as well as timings and numbers of services - obviously to reduce costs, but also to fit better to the changing passenger patterns.

The consultation page and link to the survey is here... www.scotrail.co.uk/about-scotrail/fit-future

The consultation does not mention bike/rail, but you may wish to raise this – for example, whether the Oban Line will continue to have the new bike carriages, and if these will be added to the other West Highland lines and the Far North line as originally intended. If bike provision on certain lines will make you more likely to use them, it's worth saying, as if more (or fewer) people use the line this could affect the number of services in the timetable.

Note that there is only **one open-ended question**. This question appears after you have completed the tick-box question about choosing positive/negative/both. **If you wish to raise bike/rail issues, use that space!!**

9. Scottish Government consultations

Please do respond to all that concern you. Also, as mentioned in the 'volunteer' section (4) above, we'd greatly appreciate a volunteer with the time/knowledge to join Spokes Planning Group with a view to preparing draft Spokes responses to 'policy' consultations such as one or more of these.

9.1 Penalty Charges for Parking Enforcement – *ends 4 October* [Consultation page](#)

This consultation is about toughening the rules and fee levels for some existing parking illegalities, and also setting penalty rates for the new parking offences defined in the 2019 Transport Act, and which are expected to come into effect next year – namely, pavement parking, double parking and drop-kerb parking.

Incidentally, if your editor understands it correctly, these penalties will only apply in Councils which have decriminalised parking enforcement – this includes Edinburgh, Midlothian and East Lothian, but not West Lothian, where the police have to enforce parking rules rather than the council doing so.

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

- ◆ **Edinburgh** consultationhub.edinburgh.gov.uk
- ◆ **Edinburgh** [Edinburgh 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!)

11. 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.