

On 11 July 2016 the Council presented its bid to the judging panel for Community Links+ funding. The Council presentation and related documents can be found in para 1607 [here](#). Spokes was asked to take part in the presentation, to describe the likely support for the project from cycling organisations. We contacted many local cycling organisations, resulting in the document below.

A summary of our verbal presentation, by Dave du Feu, is included as an appendix at the end of this document.

Edinburgh City Council proposed East-West segregated cycle route - active support from Edinburgh cycling organisations

Edinburgh has a rich cycling culture, with many bodies supporting the Council's ambition for continued rapid growth of everyday cycle use and its provision of the infrastructure to support and encourage that.

Spokes has contacted various local cycling organisations, asking if they will actively support the East-West route (assuming it is constructed more or less as in the current plans) – for example publicising it to their members/supporters, using it, and/or responding to any opposition which may arise in the press or elsewhere.

The statements below are not formal statements from the groups. They were collected at short notice, mainly from group organisers, with a few from other group members. There are also other important cycling-related organisations who we know to be very supportive but had not yet replied when this document was prepared.

1. [Roseburn Cycleroute support group](#)

The webmaster says...

- *I would keep the site up to date with changes and add new fact-based articles where needed.*
- *I would see the website's main role as linking everyone else's efforts together.*
- *I would publicise events that anyone else organises.*
- *I would publish any articles or blog posts that anyone else writes.*
- *In terms of scope, we are definitely supportive of the whole route.*
- *At the moment we are emphasizing local support in the Roseburn area in view of local opposition. I am happy to alter the balance of local versus global depending on what seems needed.*

2. [Spokes, the Lothian Cycle Campaign](#) [over 1000 individual members and 4660 twitter followers]

Spokes will continue to support the route through

- *our website*
- *facebook*
- *twitter*
- *the Spokes Bulletin*
- *emails to members*
- *contacts with councillors and Sustrans*
- *and any other means useful and appropriate*

3. [City Cycling Edinburgh](#) [online discussion forum with over 1000 registered users]

The vast majority of CCEers (perhaps 100%!) support this route. I'm sure most will try bits when they are built and will use parts when they are part of their journeys. CCE will of course continue to discuss whatever happens and encourage individuals to contact relevant Councillors etc.

4. [Pedal on Parliament](#) [5000 people cycled to the Scottish Parliament in 2016, many from Edinburgh]

Pedal on Parliament is keen to support the east-west cycle route - we hope that in our future campaigning we can promote it as a local exemplar of the sort of infrastructure that can support cycling as a real option for all from 8-80.

Some of the feeder rides to PoP events will use the route, thus publicising it to more individuals.

5. [Edinburgh Belles](#) [social cycling group for women of all ages & abilities, 475 members]

Edinburgh Belles absolutely supportive. A quality east west route would do wonders for groups to get across the city in a safe and accessible way. I would be delighted to use the route when planning group rides!!!

6. [Gogarburn Bicycle User Group](#) [several 100 members]

We speak to colleagues who live in the City Centre or East End and want to cycle to work but lack a safe route that we could recommend. This route would give them one. We will continue to support the route and encourage our members to do likewise.

7. [Edinburgh EasyCycle](#) and [20-Milers](#) [two associated groups which organise several recreational rides each month for less confident or less experienced cyclists, with a mailing list of 150 regulars]

I am actively involved in running Edinburgh 20-Milers and EasyCycle. Both groups aim to provide less experienced and less confident cyclists with help and support in getting into cycling, both for leisure and as an everyday means of transport. I can tell you unequivocally that, if and when the proposed east-west route comes about, both groups will definitely make good use of it for our organised rides.

One of our aims is to show cyclists useful local routes where they can cycle in relative safety. Because of the lack of such routes in the city centre, we have tended to avoid that area for our organised rides. This is despite the fact that many of our members need to use the city centre for work, shopping, social life, etc. The proposed Roseburn to Leith route would go a long way to meeting that need, and we would be delighted to include it on our rides.

8. [Edinburgh Bike Station](#) [the Bike Station is a Social Enterprise which has recycled over 50,000 bikes, organises many cycling workshops, events, training of individuals in everyday cycling, and so on]

We do public Dr Bike Sessions, with incentives such as lights, bells and so on for individuals who get their bikes checked. We also organise occasional Family Friendly sessions, where people can try out electric bikes (we have 5 now) or child seats or a trailer.

Most of these sessions are at the Meadows but we can organise events to support the Roseburn path, especially if we worked with other local organisations to promote this.

9. [Edinburgh Festival of Cycling, EdFoC](#) [annual festival with around 100 events and 5000 participants, widely advertised by social media to interested groups and individuals worldwide]

The route will be very valuable in increasing Edinburgh's potential as a tourist destination, particularly making it easier for visitors to access the many venues of all the Edinburgh Festivals, including EdFoC, by bike. Venues in the city centre will become more accessible, and visitors will also be able easily to travel by bike from the centre to venues in the suburbs. Obviously we already encourage people to visit EdFoC venues by bike, but the route will greatly enhance the opportunities; we urge the city and its other Festivals similarly to encourage visitors to get to venues by bike, particularly once the new route is open.

More generally, the route will show visitors that the City is truly committed to become more cycle friendly, with all the economic benefits which that will bring. Without such investment in infrastructure, Edinburgh risks falling behind other world cities as a place to live and visit.

10. [Edinburgh All Ability Bike Centre](#) [Has a big collection of adapted bikes, to enable a wide range of people to participate in cycling activities, whatever their background, age or ability. Over 80 regular users]

See Cycling UK below

11. [Cycling UK Scotland](#) [Formerly CTC Scotland, over 1000 members in Edinburgh & Lothians]

We host a number of funded initiatives wholly or partially in Edinburgh, including Edinburgh ABC (above), the Women's Cycle Forum, and the Big Bike Revival.

All of these will be happy to support the East-West Route across the city, from Roseburn to Picardy Place and Leith - above all, our members will use it, especially those new to cycling and those who might otherwise be discouraged from cycling. Our support will also include publicity among our members and organised rides using the route. Our activities above are geared especially towards 'hard-to-reach' groups - groups which particularly benefit from segregated cycle facilities.

12. Individual initiatives

Many individuals have supported the route so far, often informed by some of the above organisations - for example by contacting their councillors, writing blogs, rebutting negative comments to newspaper articles, etc, and we are sure they will continue to do so. For example, two supporters told us...

I am also happy personally to blog about the route in a positive way as an Edinburgh west resident.

I strongly support the route as I'm currently blocked from travelling to the city centre with my family as there isn't a route safe enough. This has seen me set up a petition supporting it and write numerous tweets & blogs.

SUMMARY OF VERBAL PRESENTATION BY SPOKES TO JUDGING PANEL

The Scottish Government and Sustrans are seeking an *exemplary* project – to show the worth of investment in major segregated cycle schemes. To meet this objective the winning bid must not just be designed well (see Council presentation) but also...

- ◆ Well used and well supported
- ◆ Reliably delivered by the Council
- ◆ Not watered down after funding has been awarded.

Experience elsewhere (e.g. some London routes; e.g. Bear's Way, East Dunbarton) shows that onroad segregated routes which reduce car space (parked or moving) can face fierce opposition during planning, construction and/or when open. We argue that the Edinburgh project is more resilient to such challenges, and therefore more likely to be fully delivered and well used, than most, thanks to...

1. Edinburgh Council's long-standing and current commitment to cycling as a means of transport
2. Active support from an extensive local network of cycling organisations

1. Strong and established Council commitment to cycling as a means of transport

- ◆ **A consistent record over several decades**
 - 80s/90s – Extensive (and costly) network of tarmacked offroad routes, primarily on old railways. Cycle commuting doubled, roughly from 1% to 2% of trips.
 - 2000s – Extensive network of onroad cycle lanes, ASLs, shared bus corridors and continued development of offroad facilities. Cycle commuting doubled, roughly 2% to 4% of trips.
 - 2010s – Continuing expansion of onroad and offroad, linkages between routes at difficult locations, start of segregated onroad provision. Cycle commuting now 7%, on track to reach 10%+ in 2020 if provision continues to improve.
- ◆ **A strong current commitment – funding and staffing**
 - A cycling budget set at 5% of transport budget, rising by 1% yearly to 10% in 17/19 – as recommended by the Assn of Directors of Public Health – but still unique in the entire UK
 - Despite around 2000 job losses due to government cuts in council funding, the active travel team has been retained at its previous level (and very slightly increased)

2. A large and active support network of local cycling-related organisations

In parallel with the increasing growth of cycle facilities and cycling levels (1 above) an extensive cycling culture has developed in the city. Spokes has contacted many of these organisations, and a picture emerges of widespread delight at the council plan, and a strong intention actively to support it.

See the responses from these organisations in the document above. In particular, they will, *assuming the route goes ahead roughly as currently planned ...*

- ◆ Publicise the route to supporters and to others through social media and other means
- ◆ Publicise the route further by including it in (a wide variety of) social rides and publicising it as a route to relevant destinations
- ◆ Actively support it in the press and social media if and when there is opposition.

It is worth noting the following points which emerge from our document...

- ◆ The number and variety of organisations and the numbers of individuals in them
- ◆ The huge value of the route for the many people currently too nervous to cycle on the road
- ◆ That the route will have a wide variety of usage types, including work, shopping and leisure.

In summary – the route will have great support and much potential for high levels of use, and we urge the panel to award it funding from Community Links Plus.