

Zhi Min Soh memorial event, 31.5.22 - DdF notes

First, many thanks to Infrastesters for organising today's memorial to Zhi Min Soh; and to you for being here.

As Hayley said, it helps Zhi Min's family to know that people are thinking of her; and also to know that we are fighting for the changes that could save others from a similar tragedy

Disappointingly, there has still been no Fatal Accident Inquiry, but one expert has suggested that there were [two parts to the tragedy](#). First, evidence suggests that Zhi Min was already on the ground, almost certainly due to the tramlines, before being hit. Sadly, a Rabbie's bus was behind, and its driver, for whatever reason, did not stop in time.

Spokes receives many reports from people who have come off on the tramlines, most with cuts and bruises, but some with serious injury. Any of these, however, could be fatal if a driver does not stop in time. So although Zhi Min was killed at this blackspot, it can happen anywhere on the tramlines. Every report we receive is another reminder.

When the tram was being planned, Spokes argued for a safer layout, such as tramlines on one side of the road and a segregated cycleroute on the other, but our arguments failed, resulting in many more crashes and injuries than need have happened.

So what is being done now?

Lothian Buses have done a lot to build driver awareness, and several people have said they were saved by the prompt action of a Lothian Bus driver.

The Council itself is slowly, slowly introducing mitigations – first, simple ones like **advance bike traffic lights** and the “*give cyclists space*” signs which, remarkably, were unique in the UK and needed Scottish government permission to erect.

Immediately after the Festival, however, in early September, work is at last due to start on significant road layout changes at several blackspots: **South St Andrews St, South Charlotte St and Haymarket junction**.

The **West End junction**, where we are now, is to have a major redesign as part of a bike friendly and pedestrian friendly *Lothian Road Boulevard*, but this unfortunately is probably several years away and is something the new Transport Committee should prioritise.

A **Princes Street** segregated cycleroute should be another commitment and priority. So also should be **traffic reduction** in all tramline areas, since traffic pressures contribute to many cases of people meeting tramlines at a poor angle.

The **Leith tramline extension** did learn one big lesson, by providing cycle facilities separate from the tramlines though, as we know, the detailed Leith Walk cycleroute design has sadly been pretty shocking.

In conclusion, your councillors have a great deal to learn and to act on. We are pleased to see several of them here today, including Cllr Scott Arthur the new Transport Convener.

It is now our job, as concerned citizens, to be the people who keep reminding councillors, so Zhi Min Soh is not just the first person to be killed this way in Edinburgh - but also the last.