

Spokes Action-Update 22.11.22 *palindrome day!*

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0. Finding your councillors

Find your ward & councillors by typing your postcode on [this page](#) [or edinburgh.gov.uk : Council & Committees : Find your Councillor]. Note that everyone has either 3 or 4 councillors, usually from assorted parties.

1. Spokes November bike count

The biannual Spokes traffic count, on November 8, found a further substantial rise in rush hour bike traffic, whilst private and commercial motor traffic was fairly static (pun intended!) as compared to both November 2021 and May 2022. As a result, totalled at our 4 count points, northbound and southbound on Lothian Road and Forrest Road, bikes rose to 14.5% of all vehicles, from 11.0% last November and 12.7% in May this year.

A top takeaway point is that bikes totalled 20.2% of all citybound vehicles between 8-9am at our two northbound count points, 18.5% on Lothian Road and 22.5% on Forrest Road.

It is important to note that our counts are just snapshots on one day. To make them as comparable as possible we always use the same day of the week, a Tuesday, and the same time of year, but there could be one-off factors which affect particular counts.

City centre, 8-9am	Nov 2020*	Nov 2021	May 2022**	Nov 2022**
Bikes	229	270	310	358
Commercial (bus, taxi, van, etc)	679	727	728	688
Private car	1321	1454	1403	1415
Bikes as % of total traffic	10.3%	11.0%	12.7%	14.5%
% of cars which are single-occupant	79.0%	75.4%	77.7%	74.0%

*Spokes traffic counts 8-9am, totals Lothian Rd & Forrest Rd, northbound & southbound. The weather was reasonably good for all these counts, so is unlikely to have affected numbers significantly. *November 2020 was our first count during Covid. **North Bridge closed northbound.*

Counts on the same day at lunchtime and by Spokes Porty were less positive, but brought interesting questions on the impact of covid on traffic patterns, and on possible differences between the city centre and suburban areas. This summary table compares the city centre and Porty counts...

<i>All data 8-9am unless otherwise stated</i>	City Centre	Porty
Bike numbers total, compared to November 2021	up (a lot)	fairly static
Car numbers total, compared to November 2021	fairly static	up
Bike % of all vehicles, Nov 2021 -> Nov 2022	11.0%->14.5%	13.7%->12.7%
Time of day with most cars (8-9am v 1230-1330)	8-9am busiest	both equally busy
Single occupancy cars 8-9am	74% (higher)	70% (lower)
Single occupancy cars 1230-1330	68% (lower)	76% (higher)

Differences between City centre and Porty counts

For a full report on our counts, see the [12 Nov blog post](#) on our website. Comments welcome.

We also [tweeted the results](#) – please retweet!


Bring your bike along

- Saturday 26 November
- 10am - 2pm
- St Mary's Cathedral, South Lawn, Palmerston Place, West End

Free bike checks for the whole family. Includes basic repairs to brake and gear cables, punctures and brake pads.

Come and join us and see the latest progress on the

2. For your diary

- ◆ Nov 26, 10am-2pm Palmerston Place cathedral Eco-Group jointly with the Council is organising [an event](#) to celebrate the new CCWEL near the cathedral. Dr Bike will be there to check your bike free, and also a council officer to answer questions about any aspect of CCWEL. Also a **Spokes stall**, but currently we only have single volunteers to staff it, and only from 11am-2pm. More helpers would be very welcome for this and other stalls! *But anyway, please come along and say hello!*
- ◆ Dec 10, 10am-2pm (to be confirmed) **Spokes stall** at [Farmers Mkt](#)

3. Spokes news

3.1 Renewals for 2023

Members who have a standing order (or repeated paypal) and those who joined or renewed recently have been automatically renewed for the whole of 2023.

We recently emailed everyone else about renewing either now (by email) or in early 2023, when we contact you again with a choice to renew (by email or paper). Thank you to everyone who has renewed already.

Unfortunately a minority of members who responded had their emails rejected by our Spokes gmail account. We are sorry about this – a member with computing knowledge has suggested that it may be something to do with changes to the spam algorithms which gmail uses. In future we will try sending out such emails in smaller chunks instead of 100s at the same time, to see if that avoids this problem.

Clair, our database person, sends you a brief reply when renewing your membership, so *if you have sent a renewal email and not had a response*, please try again to membership@spokes.org.uk (and mention your experience)

3.2 Be Bike Alert

Spokes member [Robert Simpson](#) is a regular (and entertaining) speaker at Midlothian Council's [Tomorrow's Drivers](#) events at Midlothian secondary schools.

Robert uses our [Be Bike Alert leaflet](#) (there's an accompanying [video](#)) created through a donation in memory of Audrey Fyfe, who was killed by a driver when cycling in Edinburgh. The materials inform drivers of hazards which cyclists often face on the roads.

Printed copies of the leaflet are available in quantity free from Spokes for anyone who can use them productively.



3.3 Picardy Place – *please help*

We have had endless battles over Picardy Place, not least the major lost case to replace the gyratory by a light-controlled road junction. With the PP saga now entering its closing stages, at least for the next few years, a new battle is underway, over an issue [we first raised in 2017](#) (point 6 in document). A landscaping plan has been approved for the main island area. It includes the expected CCWEL cyclistroute connection from York Place to Leith Walk – but **only** connecting to the Leith Walk cyclistroute via the south/east side of the island.

No cycle connection is planned from the island to Union Place (and thus to Union Street, Gayfield Square, etc). Apart from being unable to access these areas conveniently by bike, this also means that anyone heading down Leith Walk from CCWEL will need to cross Leith Walk near the Playhouse, from the island, and then cross back again at an Annandale Street crossing.

There are two ways in which this connection could be made – the pedestrian crossing to Union Place at the North end of Picardy Place could be made also suitable for cycling, or the planned crossing from Union Place to the island at its south end could be made two-way and connected down Union Place towards Leith Walk.

We raised this in a [deputation](#) to the Council's Transport Committee on 3.11.22, and have subsequently been invited to a meeting with relevant officers – but the signs are not very encouraging.

If this crossing would matter to you, please email your councillors, tell them why it matters, ask them to press for a crossing, and to get back to you. See the top of page 1 above for how to locate your councillors.

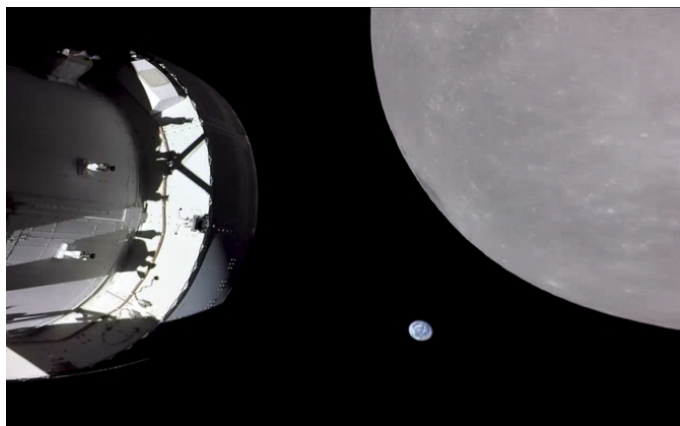
4. Other news

4.1 Climate Crisis

With COP27 in the news, this well researched article, based on recent UN scientific reports, gives a highly sobering assessment of where we are now in tackling the climate emergency...

www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/oct/27/world-close-to-irreversible-climate-breakdown-warn-major-studies

Tweets: please retweet [1](#) [2](#)



(Nov. 21, 2022) – The Earth is seen setting from the far side of the Moon just beyond the Orion spacecraft in this video taken on the sixth day of the Artemis I mission by a camera on the tip of one of Orion's solar arrays. The

*Something small that has looked after us for 1000s of years.
Now we need to look after it*

4.2 Tramline skidding risks

Our [October 2022 action-update](#) included an article on the Council's measures to try and reduce tramline crashes on the existing tram system.

This prompted one member to email us about a recent tramline crash caused by skidding on the tramline, rather than getting a bike wheel trapped. Skidding in fact is common in tramline crashes (*one estimate is one-third of all tramline crashes*) especially when there is a lot of water around.

We hope to produce a factsheet on tramline safety but, meantime, be aware of the following skid-related risks...

- ◆ Getting your wheel caught is unlikely if you are crossing at an angle of 60 degrees or greater, but skidding crashes can occur when crossing at any angle
- ◆ Try as far as possible to cross tramlines in a straight line – if you are cornering, then the bike is leaning slightly to one side, which makes skidding more likely
- ◆ Braking may also make skidding more likely, so if possible avoid braking whilst crossing
- ◆ Some of Edinburgh's tramline top surfaces are said to be several mm above the surrounding road surface – either due to poor laying, or to the road surface sinking. This makes skidding more likely.

4.3 National Dashcam Portal at risk – please help!

The Scottish Government [promised earlier this year](#) that Police Scotland would in 2023 launch an online portal at which anyone could upload video of dangerous driving, such as very close passes. Such a portal is widely available in English and Welsh police forces. Videos can be uploaded from helmet cams, handlebar cams, and of course car dashcams, and can provide vital evidence.

Now, however, Police Scotland may drop the project because of cutbacks. Cycling UK Scotland, which has been campaigning for several years for this portal, is fighting to retain the commitment, and have created an e-action enabling you easily to email the Chief Constable of Police Scotland. Please consider taking this action, [here](#).

4.4 Community Councils (especially Midlothian)

Quite a number of Spokes members are members of their local Community Council. This is a chance to find out what is going on locally – often on transport issues – and try to influence the direction of change. City councillors often attend their local CC, so it is an opportunity also to speak to them.

Find out more about CC's, and find your local one, at www.communitycouncils.scot (click the 3-bar menu at top right). Many CC's do not have their full quota of members and will consider co-opting interested local residents – and the meetings are of course open to the public.

In particular, we have been contacted by [Eskbank & Newbattle Community Council](#) (ENCC) in Midlothian. They are very keen to find a new member with a particular interest in cycling and active travel. If you live in that area, and are interested or want more info, please contact Brian Farrell, email bfarrell@eskbanknewbattlecc.org.

5. Spaces For People bike lanes, ETROs – *comment by 20.5.23*

At last the Council **has published the Orders** which will allow the 40km of Spaces for People bollard-protected cycle lanes (such as Lanark Road, Minto Street, etc) to be made permanent – and potentially improved. Or, though we hope this is unlikely, they could be scrapped or downgraded in some way. The current consultation phase of the ETRO will help determine what happens.

[Background info: the Transport Committee report on going ahead with the ETRO process is [here](#), and the detailed intentions for each scheme in [appendix 2](#) to the report. More info on our website [here](#)]

The Orders (Experimental Traffic Regulation Orders) use a [revised legal procedure](#) recently created by the Scottish Government. This is the first time the Council has used ETROs in this form, so we and they are in a bit of a learning experience. As we understand it, this is what happens...

- The existing schemes (some with minor tweaks) become legally valid from 21 Nov under the ETROs, replacing the previous soon-to-expire TTROs (Temporary Traffic Regulation Order), and will remain valid for (up to) 18 months
- During the 6 months 21 Nov 2022 to 20 May 2023, people can comment and formally object. Objections are then dealt with during the remaining 12 months (we aren't sure if they can trigger an Inquiry)
- The results of the consultation, together with Council monitoring of the schemes, will be reported to the Transport Committee, with any recommendations by officers for changes. Under the government's [revised ETRO rules](#), the Council then has the power to declare the schemes permanent, with or without changes, and without needing to advertise a further 'traditional' TRO

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- The ETROs are on the Council website [here](#), TRO/21/26 to TRO/21/30. The email and postal address for comments is shown there. Quote the relevant number(s) when responding. See also 'LATEST' below.
- The drawings are complex. Legally, they only have to show the *restrictions* such as no waiting, no entry, bus lanes, etc, which are necessary to make the bike lanes possible; **but** they do **not** have to show the bike lanes themselves or locations of the defenders etc. The Council has sketched in the bike lanes in some drawings, but not all. So it is difficult to respond without going out and checking what is there on site.
- **However, even if you don't comment on any points of detail, please do consider sending in a general email of support, to the email address shown - TRO.Consultations@edinburgh.gov.uk.**
- Spokes intends to produce a detailed response, so please do as soon as possible copy us any comments you have on individual schemes (and/or on the scheme as a whole)
- We did comment at a slightly earlier consultation stage, when most of the plans were almost identical to these. Those comments are [here](#).

LATEST

The Council has just updated its website, with more details on the above and how the ETRO process works.

See <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/public-transport/travelling-safely/4>. It is possible that more user-friendly drawings will appear here in future!?

Confusingly, they ask you to send comments to Edinburgh.Consultation@projectcentre.co.uk So we suggest you send your comments both to that address and also, as above, to TRO.Consultations@edinburgh.gov.uk.



6. Other consultations – Local

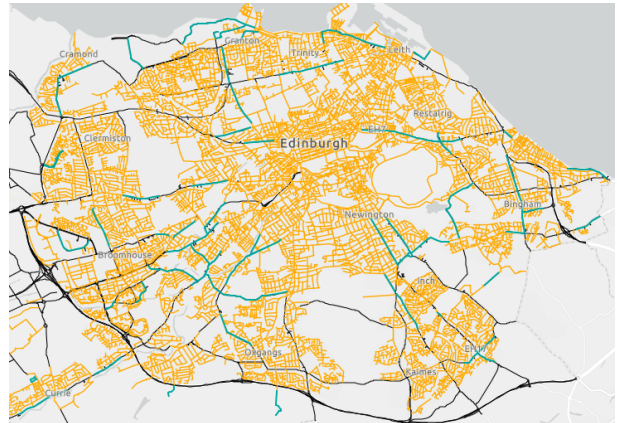
Please respond to all that concern you. Also copy to Spokes for possible use in Spokes responses

6.1 Midlothian speed limits consultation – ends 29 November

- Midlothian is consulting on a **general speed limits policy**, and is also seeking comments on **individual locations** where you think speed limits should be changed. [Consultation page](#). [Briefing Note](#).
- *If you have comments on the general policy or any queries*, email midlothianspeedpolicy@aecom.com.
- *If you have comments about speeds and limits at particular locations*, you can enter them on this [consultation map](#). Click the tab called 'About' to find instructions for how to use the map.

6.2 Edinburgh 20mph consultation – ends 8 February 2023

- The vast majority of local roads in the city were made 20mph [some years ago](#) (yellow on map) in a massive and costly exercise, and against heavy press criticism. The Scottish Government has still refused to introduce a default speed limit for urban areas, as Wales has done. As a result, every street being converted (hundreds) had to be included in Traffic Regulation Orders.
- The scheme has proved successful (see below) and so the Council is continuing to implement further reductions, 40->30, 30->20 etc. This current consultation is to cut limits from 30 to 20 on many roads which were too controversial in the earlier exercise, but, following its success, can now be tackled.
- The consultation page and an online response form are [here](#).
- It includes a [map of the proposals](#) (extract shown above) and a before-and-after analysis of the [previous 20mph scheme](#), showing significant reductions in average speeds, crashes and casualties comparing 3 years before and 3 years after the 20mph rollout.

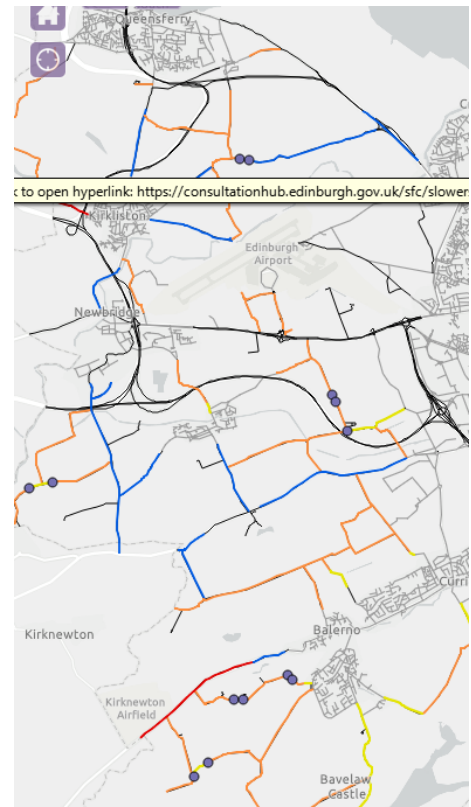


Part of **20mph** consultation map
Yellow = existing 20mph; Green = proposed 20mph

6.3 Edinburgh Rural Roads speed limits

– ends 8 February 2023

- The Council is proposing speed reductions to 20/30/40/50 on a range of rural roads – mainly in rural West Edinburgh – the area between Queensferry / Newbridge / Balerno – and also a few in the south east of the city
- The consultation page and an online response form are [here](#).
- It includes a [map of the proposals](#), (extract shown here) but, strangely, no accompanying documents explaining the background.



Part of **rural roads** consultation map
Yellow= 20; orange=30; blue=40; red=50

6.4 Thriving Green Spaces – ends 31 December

- Council policy document on parks and greenspaces. Details and online QA here-->[Consultation page](#)
- Please also send us a copy of your submission/thoughts so we can consider including them in the official spokes response.

6.5 West Edinburgh Link – **ends 2 December**

- Redetermination Orders have been advertised, for comment and/or formal objections, for the northern, central and southern sections of the Council's [West Edinburgh Link](#) project. The project's aim is to connect the South Gyle and Edinburgh Park business park area with local residential neighbourhoods by "high quality walking and cycling routes and new public spaces." Construction is due to begin in 2023.
- The Orders are RSO/22/09 to RSO/22/12 [here](#). Send your comments to TRO.Consultations@edinburgh.gov.uk or to the postal address shown there
- Note that these are so-called Redetermination Orders, and could conceivably result in lengthy delays (as with CCWEL) if there are unwithdrawn objections and if the Scottish Government then decides that an Inquiry is necessary. Responses giving general support to the proposals make this less likely.
- Spokes has not yet had time to consider these latest Orders, which are a revision of previous ones, but our comments on the previous ones are [here](#).

6.6 A71 at Dalmahoy, speed 40mph-->30mph – **ends 2 December**

- A Traffic Order to reduce the speed limit on A71 Calder Road & Dalmahoy Road, to improve junction safety
- Details [here](#). Send your support and/or comments to TRO.Consultations@edinburgh.gov.uk.

6.7 East Lothian: Cockenzie & Port Seton – **ends 2 December**

- The Council has advertised a Traffic Regulation Orders to prohibit waiting at various locations in **Cockenzie** and **Port Seton**. If you support this, or wish to suggest changes, please [submit your comments](#) to the address shown, legal@eastlothian.gov.uk. There will likely be opposition to some, so support is valuable

6.8 East Lothian: North Berwick – **ends 31 December**

- The Council is considering major new parking policies for the town, including charging for on- and off-street places. Details and response form [here](#).
- There is bound to be opposition, so please have your say if you live in or visit the town.

7. Consultations – National

Please respond to all that concern you. Also copy to Spokes for possible use in the Spokes response

7.1 National Parks in Scotland, the future – **ends 30 November**

- Seeking "views on the role of National Parks in protecting and restoring nature, tackling climate change, managing facilities and access for visitors and developing sustainable communities" [Consultation website](#)

7.2 Cycling Framework & Delivery Plan for Active Travel – **ends 19 December**

- Consulting on "strategic priorities and shared actions to maximise cycling's contribution in realising the Scottish Government's long term vision that Scotland's communities are shaped around people, with walking and cycling the most popular choice for everyday short journeys" [Consultation website](#)
- Being directly on cycling policy we are particularly keen to get your views for the spokes response. Anyone interested in doing a draft Spokes response would also be welcome, as we are always tight for volunteers for consultation responses – especially national ones.

8. 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 consultations yourviews.parliament.scot/consultation_finder
- ◆ Scottish Parliament petitions <https://petitions.parliament.scot/petitions>
- ◆ 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!)

9. 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.