

Spokes Action-Update 13.01.23

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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 Online Meetup – Tuesday 31 January, 7.30-8.30pm

Would you like to meet other Spokes members for an informal chat online? We're taking advantage of online technology to make this possible, as an experiment – if it works well, we may have further meetups.

The main aim is just to meet other members, but we also have a theme which you can optionally talk about – *What should Spokes be doing this year?*

This is how it will work (we hope!) ...

- ◆ **If you'd like to join in, email meetup@spokes.org.uk to confirm this.** Please only reply if you are definitely free then, since we may have to limit the numbers invited if too many are interested. It will be first-come first-served. You will need an internet connection with sound and video (your video can be switched off if you prefer, but most people like to see and be seen).
- ◆ We will reply to confirm that you have a place. Then - *put the date in your diary!!*
- ◆ One or two days before the meetup we will email you with a zoom link.
- ◆ On the 31st, connect to the zoom link. Try to do so 5 minutes early, in case you have problems and so we get a good start. You may initially see a screen saying that the meeting is starting shortly. If so, wait.
- ◆ Once the meeting begins you will see all the other participants. Note/check the following..
 - Make sure your name is visible – if not, click the 3 dots at top right of your picture, and enter your name where shown
 - There are also options for switching video on/off and muting/unmuting your sound, but the location may vary depending on your device – it may be at the top right, bottom left or elsewhere!
 - At the bottom of the screen there is a 'chat' option. This opens a chat space on the right side of the zoom window. You can enter comments/ thoughts here, to be seen by everyone – do make use of it to enter any points that strike you or where you can provide useful information for others. However, *do not use it whilst you are in a small group*, as the chat is only seen by the group, and is not saved.
 - You will get a reminder of these and other points when we send your zoom link for the meeting
- ◆ At the meeting, after a brief introduction, everyone will be randomly allocated to an online 'room' with a small group of (probably) 4 or 5 people, for 8-10 minutes
 - Each person should *briefly* introduce themselves and mention anything relevant (e.g. advice needed; an issue that concerns you; your experience contacting councillors; anything you do to help Spokes or are you just a 'sleeping' member; etc)
 - You are then free to chat about anything – for example, sparked by the introductions, or based on the optional theme, *What should Spokes be doing this year?*
 - We will try to have someone from spokes centrally in each group, but if not, your introductions should start a conversation. If there are useful ideas for Spokes they will be noted – and/or you can enter them in the chat when you return to the main room.
- ◆ When there is one minute left, a message will appear on the screen, and a countdown begins, so you have time to wind up the conversation. The message includes a 'leave' option – do not tick this. Once the minute is up, your room closes and you are automatically returned to the main room.
- ◆ Random allocation into small groups will be done probably four times, so you can meet other members and have the chance to chat about a variety of topics
- ◆ After the final groups session, we return to the main screen for a quick goodbye and the meeting ends.

2. Fri 24 Feb: Spokes Public Meeting – From Plans to Action??

Edinburgh Council is publishing a new draft *Active Travel Action Plan* (ATAP) and a slew of other draft transport policy documents in late January for public consultation during the Spring, and then – we hope! – action. Will they live up to the Council's tough ambition to cut car-km 30% by 2030, alongside greatly increased travel by foot, bike and public transport? Will they lead to speedy implementation? Our meeting is *your* opportunity to find out!

Speakers

- ◆ [Cllr Scott Arthur](#), Edinburgh City Transport Convener – speaking on the Council's intent
- ◆ [Daisy Narayanan](#), Head of Placemaking & Mobility – more detail on the policy documents, particularly ATAP and the Circulation Plan
- ◆ [Adrian Davis](#), Professor of Transport & Health at Napier Transport Research Unit – he will critique the policies – are they sufficiently ambitious? will they work?
- ◆ ... followed by our one-hour panel QA, chaired by [Dr Caroline Brown](#), Spokes member, Transform Scotland policy adviser, transport academic – your chance to interrogate and challenge the speakers

Arrangements

- ◆ **Where** [Augustine United Church](#) 41 George IV Bridge, Edinburgh EH1 1EL
- ◆ **Date** Friday 24 February
- ◆ **Time** Starts 7.30, Ends 9.30. Doors open 6.45 for coffee, stalls and chat
- ◆ **Queries & Questions** Queries, or questions for the speaker, can be emailed to spokes@spokes.org.uk. However, questions in person from audience members are likely to have greatest priority on the night
- ◆ **Online** We hope to live broadcast on our youtube channel – details here nearer the time – and make the recording available a few days late

Policy documents

We expect the draft policy documents below to be included in the Spring consultation. Some will be published in late January, and approved for consultation at the [February 2 Transport and Environment Committee \(TEC\)](#), whilst others (linked below) were published for the [December TEC](#).

The new administration is intending one jumbo consultation, rather than the previous approach of a series of separate consultations, so that the Council's detailed transport intentions will be finalised within the first year of the Council's 5-year term. Hopefully this will lead to a greater subsequent concentration on implementation – doubtless there'll be some strong questions on this at the public meeting!

- ◆ **Active Travel Action Plan** – a major revision on the existing [2016 ATAP](#), to be published for February 2 TEC. It will be *"the biggest and boldest in Scotland"* [according to Cllr Arthur](#). There are hints of high emphasis on main-road segregated bike provision. Above all, we will be looking for the promise of a *joined-up bike network, attractive and suitable for all, not just for the more confident*. As of mid January, Spokes has not yet seen any drafts of the new ATAP.
- ◆ **Circulation Plan** – a major document [[December version here](#); February version awaited] which is expected to evolve further, showing what transport modes will have what level of priority on what roads. This document is of major importance because... *"The Circulation Plan will form a strategic framework for all relevant investment programmes, including the major junctions review, the delivery of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, the road and footways renewals programme and the citywide roll-out of School Streets."* Whilst we welcome the concept of the plan, we have [two major concerns](#) at this (early) stage
- ◆ **Public Transport Priority Action Plan** – to be published in advance of February 2 TEC
- ◆ **Parking Action Plan** – to be published in advance of February 2 TEC
- ◆ **Road Safety Action Plan** – [draft approved for consultation](#) at December TEC
- ◆ **Air Quality Action Plan (revision)** – [draft approved for consultation](#) at December TEC

Your help needed

- ◆ **Publicise our public meeting** by passing on the [website link](#), liking on [facebook](#) and/or [retweeting](#)
- ◆ **Volunteer to help draft Spokes responses to the consultation**. We are very short of such volunteers.

Our website includes [a major article](#) previewing what we may expect to, or hope to, happen in 2023

3. For your diary

- ◆ Jan 28 (Sat) 2pm [Edinburgh Critical Mass](#) ride. Meet Meadows 2pm
- ◆ Jan 31 (Tue) 7.30-8.30 Spokes online Member MeetUp – see page 1 above
- ◆ Feb 24 (Fri) 7.30-9.30 [Spokes Public Meeting](#) - see page 2 above
- ◆ June 13 (Tue) 8-10am (to be confirmed) [Spokes Bike Breakfast](#) – save the date!!

4. Spokes news

4.1 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.

In February we plan to send out our annual data check, to confirm we have your correct membership details. If you are not yet renewed, you will also be able to renew then, either by email or by post, whichever you prefer. Full instructions will be sent.

5. CargoBike grants for organisations & Spokes member households

Spokes is keen to see more cargobikes in the city and the Lothians, and we now run the following grant schemes to assist cargobike purchase...

Organisations

Thanks to dedicated financial support from the [Galashan Trust](#), Spokes now offers grants up to £2000 to local community organisations, or micro-businesses with a community purpose, towards the cost of a cargo bike.

Most recent grant was to the Dower House Cafe in Corstorphine, who say *“it has completely revolutionised the way we live and work.”*

Spokes member households

If you buy or publicise our excellent [Spokes Maps](#), thank you!! because..*

Thanks to a useful surplus on the Spokes maps account, we now re-instate our grant offer to Spokes member households towards the cost of a cargobike. There are a limited number of grants available, up to £1500 maximum each. The picture is from our previous (trust-funded) scheme.

*Why not organise a bulk map order at your workplace? See what other Spokes members have done, [here](#). And for Christmas??

Applying for a cargobike grant

Organisations should use the information sheet and application form on our [cargobike website page](#). **Spokes member households**, please email Spokes explaining why you need a cargobike and how it will be used – generally grants will be first-come, first-served.



2022: £1500, [Woodland Learning Adventures](#), Riese & Muller Load 75



2021: £1000, Julia's Nihola family bike
[\[report\]](#); more photos: [1](#) [2](#) [3](#) [4](#)

6. 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) became 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 period 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 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.



7. Other current issues

7.1 Sheriffhall Roundabout crowdfunding appeal

The years of legal processes towards building the new flyover junction continue with a [public inquiry](#) into objections to the Traffic Orders. The original Spokes objection to the Orders is [here](#).



There is now a coordinating group for objectors, called [ShOO – Sheriffhall Overarching Objectors](#), who are crowdfunding an £8000 target to maximise the legal case against the project. Spokes is participating in the ShOO [inquiry submission](#). Also, we are making a £500 donation to the crowdfunder, and you may wish to consider a personal donation. Shoo summarises some of the main issues thus...

The proposal would generate more traffic and contradicts Transport Scotland's goal "A route map to achieve a 20 percent reduction in car kilometres by 2030."

- *The construction of the Scheme would involve immense carbon emissions, primarily through the consumption of diesel oil, concrete and steel, when immediate reductions in emissions are essential to avoid catastrophic climate change.*
- *In its operation, the scheme makes no significant or genuine contribution towards the rapid carbon reductions required to meet the targets of the Scottish Climate Change Act: building and operating it jeopardises any chance for Scotland to deliver net-zero as required by the Scottish Government's own laws.*
- *The initial budget for the Scheme was £120 million, but with massive inflation in the building industry, the actual cost would likely be at least £200 million. Even if those sums are available for transport, given widespread poverty and the financial pressures on government, they could be far better spent on public transport and active travel.*



In terms of cycling conditions, the plans do include considerable improvements at the junction itself, though Transport Scotland would not agree to create high quality routes from the roundabout to important destinations such as the Bioquarter. However cycling, walking and bus conditions could all be greatly improved for a fraction of the cost of the proposed road scheme.

7.2 CCWEL surfacing

[CCWEL](#) construction is proceeding well, as this Roseburn picture shows.

However in parts as you head towards Donaldsons the surface is very undulating, which is not only uncomfy but is creating significant puddles - this could be particularly dangerous in freezing weather.

To comment about this before the project is signed off, or if you have any other queries, email ccwel@edinburgh.gov.uk.

It would also be worth copying in the [City Centre Ward councillors](#) (ward 11).



CCWEL at Roseburn

photo: John Robson

7.3 Lawnmarket cobbles

The Council is planning in the next financial year (23/24) to re-lay the very uneven setts on Lawnmarket (between George IV Bridge and the Castle).

Some years ago, thanks to Spokes, the Council incorporated consideration for cycling and walking into its [policy on setted streets](#) – which previously had been only about heritage. It is not just a question of cycling comfort, but of danger – both for cyclists and for pedestrians with certain types of walking disabilities, as became clear in the consultation which led to the new policy. In particular, the ‘principles’ (appendix 2, p35) now include...

Any construction or re-construction of setted streets in Edinburgh which is regularly used by cyclists and pedestrians should use setts in a way that facilitates active travel. This may mean using the sawn edge on the upward facing side or, specially at crossing points for walking and, where possible, design features, such as strips of flat-top setts to aid cycling.

However, the Council intends to go against this policy and not take account of cyclist or pedestrian issues, because it has been decided that heritage issues over-ride this. They told us...

We look at how to construct setted streets on an individual basis, as agreed in the committee report approving the Strategy for Setted Streets in 2018. Lawnmarket is one of the most historically significant streets in Edinburgh. Edinburgh World Heritage do not support the removal of the traditional setts at this location. We would, therefore, be proposing to retain the original setts as part of the design. I do think that there is still a bit of consultation to be carried out on this scheme and we are still unsure on the final design so this is still subject to change.

As you can see, a final decision has not yet been taken. **If you would like provision made for cyclists and pedestrians please email the [City Centre Ward councillors \(ward 11\)](#).** Send us any useful replies.

One solution would be cycling strips using flat-topped setts (as at the historic Linlithgow Cross town centre) – and a pedestrian crossing using similar. Another would be to use flat-topped for the entire area, as was done very successfully some years ago at the High Street junction with George IV Bridge, and which immediately abuts the area now to be resurfaced.

8. Other consultations – Local

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

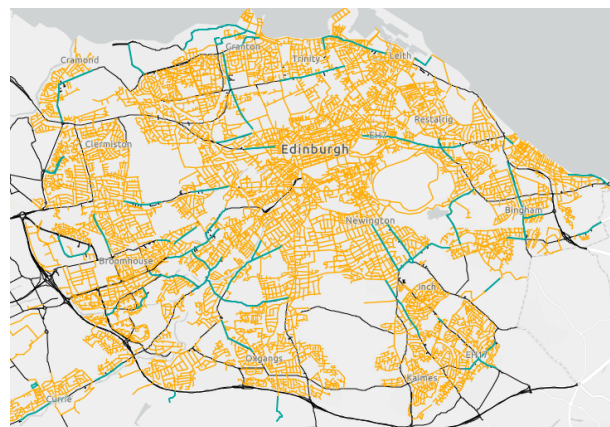
8.1 Gorgie/Dalry 20-minute neighbourhood – ends 16 Jan

- The Council is consulting on the future of Gorgie/Dalry as a local area. Funding has been allocated to completely resurface the main road in a year or two's time, and the Council wishes to take the opportunity to improve conditions for walking, cycling and generally getting around in the area.
- Please respond to the consultation [here](#) and/or by emailing 20minuteneighbourhood@edinburgh.gov.uk – also use that email address for any queries.
- We would like to see some radical traffic-reduction solutions such as a bus gate, providing space for segregated cycling and wider footways.
- Note that the drawing shown is not an official proposal by the Council. It was tweeted by local councillor [Ross McKenzie](#) as an example of what could be done.
- Unfortunately Spokes has not yet found a volunteer to respond to the consultation, and so we may not be able officially to make this and other points – *we need more Planning Group members with the time and interest to draft responses, whether brief or extensive, to such consultations!!*



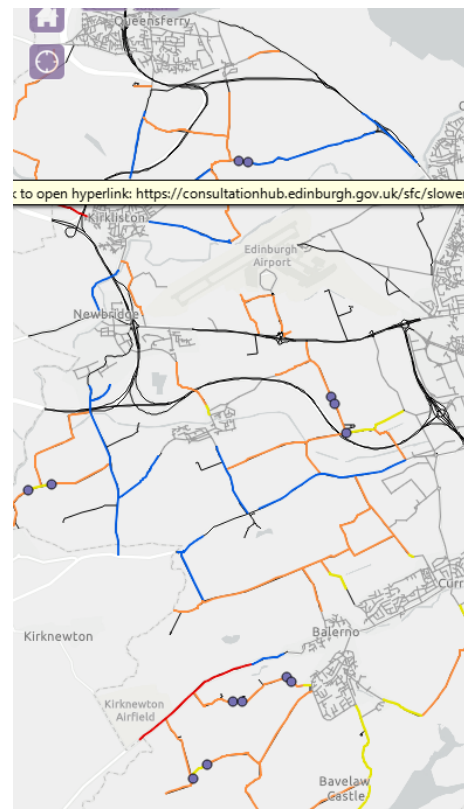
8.2 Edinburgh 20mph consultation – ends 8 Feb

- 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



Part of rural roads consultation map

Yellow= 20; orange=30; blue=40; red=50

8.3 Edinburgh Rural Roads speed limits – ends 8 Feb

- 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.

9. 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!)

10. 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.