

Spokes letter to Patrick Harvie re: cycle parking legislation

Mr Harvie,

We are writing on behalf of Spokes, the Lothian Cycling Campaign. One of the things we do at Spokes is scrutinise planning applications in order to check that they fulfil guidance and standards on active travel. An issue we frequently see, and comment on, is substandard cycle parking in new housing and commercial developments. For example, bike parking which is unsuitable for non-standard bikes, poorly sited (e.g., not visible at the main entrance), insufficiently secure or simply absent altogether. Despite our comments, these developments are often approved. Three fairly recent examples in Edinburgh are:

- The new St James Centre, which has no racks at the main entrance on Leith St and at the entrance on Little King Street has only two-tier bike racks, which are difficult to use even for many non-disabled people with standard bikes.
- The new Co-op supermarket on Carter Drive, which has no cycle parking at all.
- The Murrayfield Mini Stadium (8,000 seater), which also has no cycle parking at all.

We therefore believe a new approach is required, and that legislation requiring mandatory cycle parking be included in Building Standards for all new developments is necessary. There could also be an opportunity to mandate cycle parking provision for extensions and many refurbishment projects. Similar legislation, such as the Energy Performance of Buildings (Scotland) Regulations, has worked successfully to improve the energy efficiency of new buildings. We consider that taking a Building Standards regulations and guidance approach is likely to prove more effective than use of planning regulations, although the ongoing work on National Planning Framework 4 provides an opportunity to improve how the planning system deals with cycle parking.

Without legislation we fear that developers will continue to provide poor, inappropriate or non-existent cycle parking. As a consequence, active travel budgets (i.e., taxpayers' money) will continue to be diverted into retrofitting cycle parking which should have been installed and paid for by the developer at the time of construction.

As the newly-appointed Minister for Zero Carbon Buildings and Active Travel, we believe this is covered by your remit, possibly in conjunction with the Minister who deals with Building Standards. Will you therefore agree to bring forward such legislation?

One possible opening is through the [current consultation on energy aspects](#), given that encouraging travel by bike is even more significant for energy reduction than EV travel, which is being consulted on.

Spokes Planning Group