

The Action-Update of Spokes the Lothian Cycle Campaign

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Our main communication with Spokes members is now the electronic-only **Action-Update** which goes to all emailable members "roughly monthly," when there are enough important developments, news of forthcoming events, relevant road, traffic and planning matters, etc. Occasionally we need the circular on paper too (e.g. to use at public meetings). We then produce **Spokesworker** in place of the online-only Action-Update. Both documents also appear on our website, under the [Spokesworker tab](#).

So, to keep in touch with events, developments & opportunities... be a Spokes member and make sure we have your email address.

'FUTURE STREETS'

Spokes Public Meeting, Thu 29 Feb, 7.30

Augustine United, 41 George IV Bridge EH1 1EL

Cllr Scott Arthur, Edinburgh Transport Convener

Laura Laker, Environment journalist, cycling specialist

QA chair: Ewen Maclean, Blackford Safe Routes

6.45 for coffee, stall, chat

Membership stall to join or renew

On February 1st Edinburgh's [Transport Committee](#) approved the *Future Streets* policy, which incorporates a Circulation Plan (which transport modes have priority on which roads) the Active Travel Action Plan ATAP and City Centre Transformation (freeing the City Centre from through motor traffic). **More detail is awaited, but these are transformative decisions.**

However, we are all too familiar with policies which take forever – or never – to implement. For a city with a target to cut car-km 30% by 2030, and become [net zero](#) by 2030, that is no longer acceptable - if it ever was!

The decade-long gestation of [CCWEL](#) or of [George Street](#), must no longer be the pattern. *Rather than one project taking many years, we need multiple projects in one year!* Some European cities (e.g. Ghent) removed all city-centre through traffic 'in a oner,' whilst Covid Spaces for People showed that protected cycle lanes on main roads can happen rapidly (though materials, design and engagement need careful thought).

Moreover, the Council's recent bold approach to implementing the pavement parking ban (see below) shows that it can act both expeditiously and effectively when it so decides.

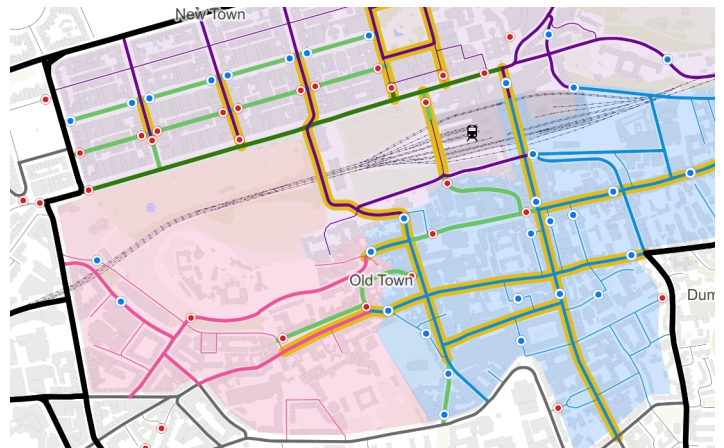
The 'Future Streets' documents

The (massive) *Future Streets* reports were approved (with minor changes) by the [Transport Committee](#). If you are reading this in print, go to our website ([21.2.24 blog](#)) to find the links.

- ◆ [Report 7.1 City Mobility Plan 1st Review](#) This includes the entire *Active Travel Action Plan* (ATAP) as appendix 6 !
- ◆ [Report 7.2 Our Future Streets: circulation plan for Edinburgh \(+ part2\)](#) Includes what modes get priority on what streets; 'liveable neighbourhoods'; a proposed cycleroute network map; and a much-strengthened City Centre Transformation.

The new **City Centre** plans remove through traffic, to "create an extensive area between Lothian Road, Lauriston Place, Holyrood Park and Queen Street without general through / car traffic." **There are of course questions! ...**

- ◆ When will implementation happen?
- ◆ Will it be done 'in a oner' as Ghent did; or in steps, possibly bringing temporary problems & objections at each stage
- ◆ Lothian Rd & West End traffic may rise a lot – see below.



City Centre - for a full colour map, and keys, see the [21.2.24 blog](#) at spokes.org.uk. However, even in the printed black & white map, note the dots, which represent 'traffic filters' restricting access to certain traffic modes, usually buses, taxis and bikes. The result is 3 zones, New Town and East and West Old Town, with filters allowing private motor traffic into but not through each zone

Lothian Road & West End Junction

The City centre proposals remove north-south general traffic from North Bridge and the Mound, which we welcome. But, despite some switching from car to sustainable modes, Council modelling suggests more traffic in Lothian Road, at the [West End fatality junction](#) and on the western section of Queens Drive in Holyrood Park. How will this be resolved?

The Council says promised '[Lothian Road Boulevard](#)' bike lanes & bus priority will still happen but may take longer. Spokes [traffic counts](#) show Lothian Road to be an important cycleroute already, with bikes forming 15%-20% of all vehicles citybound in the morning rush hour; and of course the West End Junction is a top danger spot in the Council's *Major Junctions Review*.

[continued overleaf]

PAVEMENT PARKING

Edinburgh was the **first Scottish Council** to enforce the new law on **pavement** and **double** parking. Many feared a 'war on the motorist' reaction (perhaps why other councils waited!)

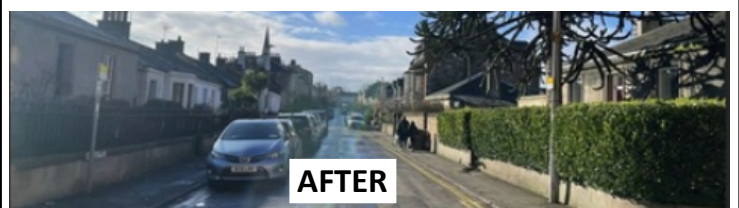
Edinburgh, however, went ahead, with a massive and effective advance campaign, strongly led by the Transport Convener, showing the problems for wheelchairs and buggies, identifying and communicating with potentially difficult streets, preparing in advance to tackle difficulties, and publicising enforcement.

And, largely, it worked - with relatively little social media angst. Of course continued enforcement will be needed.

Photos: Regent Terrace, Portobello, showing pavements now clear for walkers, and better access for bin lorries, etc.



BEFORE



AFTER

OTHER EVENTS

For these & more links see the events column at [Spokes.org.uk](https://spokes.org.uk)

- ◆ Mar 1 [Livingstreetsedinburgh.org.uk](https://livingstreetsedinburgh.org.uk) Midday online – talk & QA re City Centre traffic plans, with Daisy Narayanan
- ◆ Mar 8 [Infrastesters.org.uk](https://infrastesters.org.uk) Ride 7.30pm, Middle Meadow Walk, for International Women's Day, ending at -->
- ◆ Mar 8 [TheCausey.org](https://thecausey.org) Street projections event, 7.30-9pm
- ◆ Mar 20 **CCWEL official opening** 11.30-2.30 outside *Four Points by Sheraton* hotel, 90 Haymarket Ter. Poss Spokes stall
- ◆ Mar 30 twitter.com/EdCriticalMass 2pm Middle Mdw Walk
- ◆ May 31-June 6 edfoc.org.uk Edinburgh Festival of Cycling

SPOKES COMPETITION 2024

◆ Our annual competition this year will be on the theme of **Cycling and Sustainance**. The title may change if anyone can think of anything better! but the theme is decided – anything linking cycling with food and/or drink. For example...

- favourite recipe/food to take on a recreational ride
- transporting food for a food bank
- returning with produce &/or tools from your allotment
- favourite takeaway for a coffee on your way to work

Details will be on our website, and in a member circular, later in the Spring, but get your mental taste buds working now!

◆ Last year's comp [spokes.org.uk, [19.9.23 blog](https://spokes.org.uk/19.9.23) for results]

Bike Storage at Home, revealed many great ideas, comments, innovations and fun, whether you live in a flat or if you're fortunate enough to have a garden or a garage. But also showed it's a really serious issue.

So we produced a factsheet from the entries [there's a link to it in the above blog].



TRAMLINE EXTENSION

In addition to *Future Streets*, the Feb 1 TEC also approved officers preparing a consultation on alternative routes for a tramline from Granton to the Bioquarter. The consultation will probably not start for some weeks, and will last 12 weeks.

The Granton tramline section is highly controversial! ...

either onroad via Orchard Brae, Dean Bridge to the West End **or partly offroad** using Roseburn path south from Telford Road to Russell Road (with a walk/wheel/cycle path beside)

Whichever route is chosen, there are major implications for *public transport* and for *cycling* (good and bad), and spokes has laid out the pros and cons as we currently see them in the [21.2.24 blog](https://spokes.org.uk/21.2.24) at spokes.org.uk.

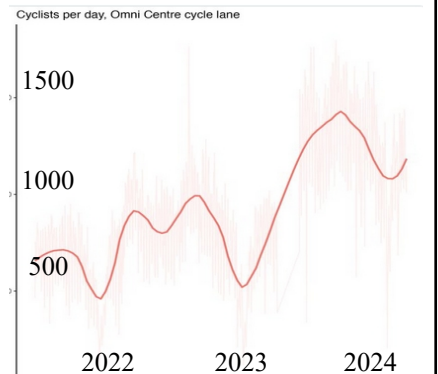
Unfortunately there is some misinformation around. As far as we know, no councillor or officer ever said cycling would be banned if tram uses the Roseburn path. The initial officer report to the Transport Committee did prefer the Roseburn option and did say cycling would be "discouraged." However, following an intensive campaign by Spokes [[blog 1.2.24](https://spokes.org.uk/blog/1.2.24)] and others, the Transport Committee made clear that the consultation must treat cycling positively, certainly not to be 'discouraged', and that it must consider both route options.

If you contacted your councillors in our campaign, thank you!

BIKES PER DAY, OMNI LANE

The graph shows the number of bikes per day on the 2-way cycle lane outside Omni Centre, just down from Leith Street. Data is from the Cycling Scotland automatic data counter. For all their faults, the lanes are effective!

[Thanks to [@edtiss](https://twitter.com/edtiss) for passing this on]



WHAT YOU CAN DO

If you wish to follow up any Edinburgh issues from this SpokesWorker, use your councillors. Go to edinburgh.gov.uk then *Council & Committees*, then *Find Your Councillor*.

'FUTURE STREETS' POLICIES & ACTIONS [ctd from p1]

Cycleroute Network & Active Travel Action Plan (ATAP)

The new ATAP is Appendix 6 of the Mobility Plan (7.1 above). *Given the mass of documentation, Spokes has not yet scrutinised the new ATAP in detail. However, we strongly welcome the intention that the 'Primary Cycle Network' should be largely segregated routes on main roads.*

Most of Edinburgh's often excellent offroad network is called 'secondary' - not to downgrade its value but to recognise its role providing local routes and connections, some remaining main connections, and of course significant recreational value.

For the network map see ATAP (page 22) or our [21.2.24 blog](https://spokes.org.uk/21.2.24). Overall it's good, but the segregated onroad network is not fully connected, with some sections diverted. The rationale is in 4.15 of the Circulation Plan: specifically where space is very tight it may be prioritised to walking and, in some cases, to public transport. We do however understand that the map may be further refined as the detail is developed.

As with the City Centre, the Council's 2030 targets mean that implementation must be rapid. One expert told us, "*This almost certainly has to mean much wider/routine application of quick/cheap/adaptable light segregation, for example, like*

Spaces for People and/or Holyrood Road designs, but with careful thought to design at bus stop bypasses & junctions.

The A8 project, including extending CCWEL to Gogar

The Committee agreed to draw up exciting plans for the A8, "*an integrated street upgrade as a key corridor from Roseburn to Gogar, incorporating transformation of St Johns Road as a shopping street, better walking/wheeling, protected cycling infrastructure and improved bus journey times and reliability.*"

This sounds a substantial project, so care is needed that it doesn't occupy so much staff resource that rapid wider network implementation loses out. No timescale is given, and Scottish Government or other funding is still to be achieved.

20-minute neighbourhood strategy

This promises local schemes "*to deliver streets pavements and places that allow everyone to get around easily, improving health & wellbeing.*" Two are now in place experimentally, [Leith Connections](https://spokes.org.uk/leith-connections) & [Corstorphine Connections](https://spokes.org.uk/corstorphine-connections). Others being developed include [Gorgie/Dalry](https://spokes.org.uk/gorgie-dalry), [Portobello](https://spokes.org.uk/portobello), [Wester Hailes](https://spokes.org.uk/wester-hailes), [Craigmillar/Bingham](https://spokes.org.uk/craigmillar-bingham). However, given the violent reaction to such schemes by a [minority](https://spokes.org.uk/minority) the document is hesitation on traffic restrictions: "*intrusive through traffic will be addressed where there is local support.*"