Spokes Action-Update 09.08.24

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0. Finding your councillors

In Edinburgh, find your ward & councillors by typing your postcode on this page [or edinburgh.gov.uk : Council & Committees : Find your Councillor]. Everyone has either 3 or 4 councillors, usually from assorted parties. For any Council, and to find MSPs, you can use writetothem.com.

1. Cycling & Sustenance - Spokes Summer 2024 competition

Bikes and food are inextricably linked in so many ways!

For our big 2024 annual competition we want to hear how *you* connect bikes with food and/or drink, in whatever way. As always, you could win a great prize and some modest fame, and your ideas or experiences could help other people. See next page for all the fantastic prizes! Closing date midnight Sunday 15 September.

For example, you could write about…

- your favourite recipe/food to take on a recreational ride [hints]
- transporting food by pedal-power for a food bank [for example]
- returning with produce and tools from your allotment
- favourite takeaway for a coffee on your cycle to work
- food shopping by bike [hints]
- a philosophical treatise on the relationship between food & cycling
- absolutely any ideas, practicalities or experiences linking food and bikes

Your entry might be an amusing incident, a simple handy hint, a heartfelt plea, an interesting picture or whatever – as long as it is about cycling and sustenance, we want to hear from you!

Factors in judging may include how *useful* your idea is, or how *interesting* or *unusual* your experience. Words alone are fine, even just one superb sentence, but a picture, diagram etc often adds value to an entry.
To help inspire you, here are some food-related entries from previous competitions on other topics...

First prize went to **Jeanine Bezuijen** who happily carried on shopping by bike when nine months pregnant, thanks to her Dutch bike with its large front basket – which she loves! Like many people, she chooses shops with good bike parking, praising **Dalry Road Lidl**. Jeanine grew up in the Netherlands where, she says, *"shopping by bike is the rule rather than the exception."*

1st PRIZE

Sustrans Scotland Super-Snack

by *Sustrans Scotland Staff*

Preparation time:	*Cooking time:*
10 mins	None

Cheese Roll Tomato Piece of fruit Chocolate Cake	1. During the morning stop at a shop and buy the ingredients – has to be done every day. 2. Squash into a pannier. 3. Find a bench to sit on or stream to sit beside. 4. Place cheese and tomato in roll and eat 5. Eat fruit, chocolate and cake when you fancy.

"It's simple and cheap ... helps you remember that your ride is a holiday and should have frequent stops ... a chance to shop locally ... provides two-fifths of your fruit and veg for the day."

Second prize – Sam Taylor (age 9), Edinburgh

"Usually we just walk to the shops but last year we went fruit picking in our cargo bike. It was lots of fun.

... the only bad thing about it was how you get there... there were loads of cars and not that many cycle lanes. So I think WE NEED MORE CYCLE LANES AND LESS CARS!"

It's easy to enter: but please carefully read the rules.

As usual with our competitions, all or most entries will appear on our website (prizewinners normally named, other entries anonymous) and hopefully will give other people useful ideas (or a laugh!)

There are loads of great prizes – see next page - and most years about half of all entrants get either a prize or a runner-up map or buff!!

Cycling & Sustenance - Spokes Summer 2024 competition

PRIZES … Top winner chooses first, then 2nd place prizewinner, and so on

- **ScotRail** Return ticket for 2 adults & up to 4 kids (age 5-15) between any 2 ScotRail stations
- **Spokes** £1000 voucher* towards purchase of a cargo-bike
- **Spokes** £200 voucher* towards purchase of an e-bike
- **Spokes** Full set of 4 Spokes maps plus Spokes Edinburgh buff**
- **Cameo Picturehouse** – 2 tickets
- **Far From the Madding Crowd bookshop (Linlithgow)** – *The Cycling Chef on the Go* by Alan Murchison, top chef & top cyclist
- **Lanterne Rouge** (cyclists' favourite cafe, in Gifford) £20 voucher
- **Dowerhouse** **or** **Rosebean Cafe** £25 voucher valid at either cafe
- **Edinburgh BikeCoop** £50 voucher
- **Edinburgh Festival of Cycling** One day free hire of the EdFoC Urban Arrow cargobike
- **Laidback Bikes** Electric or manual recumbent tour, solo or guided to Cramond *OR* one day free hire of a cargo bike
- **Hart's Cyclery** One-week hire of an e-bike
- **Camera Obscura & World of Illusions** – Family ticket
- **Sustrans online shop** £20 voucher *[to be confirmed]*
- **Spokes** 10 **runners-up** will each win 1 map or buff**

* This voucher may only be used for the purpose stated above. It may only be used by the winner and is not transferable. It must be used at an Edinburgh or Lothians independent bike shop which is not one of the big national chains. We will pay the shop direct.

** Your buff will show a section of our Edinburgh map (Midlothian buffs are sold out)

2. Urgent – bus lane threat

Whilst protected bike lanes are our top objective for main roads, this is not yet the case for many roads, and where space is tight bus lanes often get priority over bike lanes because they carry very large numbers of people, thus reducing car use.

Many existing and potential cyclists are worried about sharing the roads with motor traffic; but bus lanes (during operational hours) do provide a somewhat less hostile environment, with many fewer vehicles than the main traffic lane and with highly experienced drivers who (at least for Lothian Buses) are trained in cycle awareness.

It is essential to keep bus lanes as bike-friendly as possible, so that as many potential cyclists as possible feel able to use them when there is as yet no separate bike route or convenient alternative.

We are pleased that the Council is at long last proposing a 7-7-7 bus lane experiment (7 days a week, 7am-7pm), after the regrettable decision by a previous Council to make bus lanes weekday-peak-hour-only. The experiment will use Balerno-Musselburgh corridor, if agreed at the 15 August Transport Committee.

BUT, quite unexpectedly, the Committee Report on the experiment also proposes that the experiment should allow private hire cars to use bus lanes, with a view to making this permanent if 'successful.'

Furthermore, the Report does not once mention cycling. It is as if bus lanes have no relevance at all for cyclists and for safe cycling. This is a major failing.

Spokes Planning Group will be discussing this shortly, and we also know that Edinburgh Bus Users Group will have a deputation objecting (due to potential increased bus delays rather than because of cycling relevance).

If the proposal concerns you, please email your councillors urgently. See p1 (section 0) to find email addresses.

Ask your councillors (you have either 3 or 4) to raise your concerns with their party's transport representative, or to speak up themselves if they are on the Transport Committee. Members of the Committee are already thinking about the Committee reports, so it is vital to email urgently, preferably not just a day or two before the 15 August Committee.

3. Dates for your diary

- Events marked * will have a **Spokes stall** – please volunteer to help! Or come and say hello anyway!
- Also, there are many **current consultations**, each with their own **closing date** – see sections 5 & 6 below.

Apr 27 – Sep 22 *Cycling in Edinburgh exhibition* at Museum of Edinburgh, Royal Mile
Spokes has participated in designing the exhibition, along with *Critical Mass*, *Infrasisters* and *Bike Buses*. *Spokes maps* and *buffs* will, hopefully, be on sale in the museum shop, and our *summer bulletin* available to pick up.

August 31 *Edinburgh Critical Mass* – monthly ride in the city

Sept 23-29 *Scotland Climate week*

Oct 8 *Cycling Scotland annual conference* – great speaker lineup (including Scot Gov Transport Cabinet Secretary, and Glasgow's Head of Transport Planning) and a chance to meet other people interested in promoting cycling and walking from around Scotland. There will be a Spokes stall – please volunteer to help if you are there. *The fee is costly, but Spokes can pay for one or two more members if you are actively involved in a working group.*

4. Snippets

4.1 Transport Committee (TEC)

You may be aware that all Transport Committee papers can be found here...
https://democracy.edinburgh.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=136
Spokes now has a web page with links to the papers, Spokes notes, and tweet threads for most meetings.

4.2 Cycling Gardeners of Edinburgh

As you probably know, Spokes offers grants to voluntary organisations and microbusinesses towards the cost of a cargobike (see details, pictures and reports here), partly thanks to support from the Galashan Trust. Businesses we have supported include the Cycling Gardeners (2 grants), a plumber, a handyman, a delivery business, and more.

The Cycling Gardeners, in particular, have flourished, now with 5 cargobikes and 150 regular customers. The tool manufacturer that they use (Stihl) has made a professional promotional video for them, which you can see here.

They are particularly proud of their environmental credentials, which of course include the cargobikes for transport, but also extend much further into all aspects of their work.

4.3 Cycle (anywhere) for Edinburgh Children's Hospital Charity

ECHC is running a 'Tour de Little France' fundraiser, details **here**. You cycle a cumulative number of km (alone or with others) anywhere, by 30 September. If details are not clear, contact amy.russell@echcharity.org.

4.4 Bikes on Trams - reminder

A reminder that bikes are not allowed on Edinburgh trams during August, due to the pressures of the Festival population. Despite this off-month, which fortunately is in the summer, we remain positive about the bike-carriage policy, which resulted from intense Spokes lobbying over a period of years before the tram was introduced. As far as we know, Edinburgh remains the only onroad tram in the UK to allow bikes on regular scheduled services – albeit this is common in Europe and the US.

4.5 Motornormativity

Interesting 20-minute video based on research by Prof Ian Walker and others, who use the term 'Motornormativity' in describing how decisions (by policy makers *and* by individuals) show unconscious biases which favour motor transport.

The video (don't be put off by the rather garish intro!) is **here** and the research paper **here**.

4.6 Urban Arrow cargobike for sale

"*Used 2019 Urban Arrow for sale. Higher Mileage but still great Condition. Lots of extras. Includes rain cover, outdoor parking poncho, front bench to hold an extra child, luggage net, rear rack for panniers, a brand new battery, and a Enviolo Cargoline hub (which can handle heavier loads). Well maintained and much loved. Selling as children have outgrown*."

Email for full info: **urbanarrowedinburgh@gmail.com**

This is an Urban Arrow, but not the one on sale

5. Climate news & links

5.1 ClimateXChange

"*Scotland's centre of expertise on climate change, funded by the Scottish Government since 1 April 2011. We commission research and analysis to support the Scottish Government as it develops policies on adapting to the changing climate and transitioning to net zero. We respond to their questions and requests for evidence, and identify upcoming evidence needs*."

5.2 Climate Ready South East Scotland

"*A new project to support collaborative climate action in the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region. The project is led by sustainability charity Sniffer, working closely with our six local authorities: City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian.*"

"*Across the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region, our climate is already changing, and will continue to do so. This means more extreme weather; hotter, drier summers, wetter winters, and rising sea levels. By carrying out a climate risk and opportunity assessment between now and March 2025, Climate Ready South East Scotland will help us to better understand how climate change will affect our region. It will also highlight where more action is needed to protect the places we live, so that our communities can flourish in a changing climate.*"

In particular, CRSES is looking for *your* weather & climate-related stories. Click here.

5.3 Portobello Climate Cafe

A weekly Climate Café every Sunday on Portobello beach front, from 3pm, near Towerbank & Beach Lane. Just drop by at any time - *"it's a great opportunity to sit down and have a blether about our climate and what's going wrong."* *www.facebook.com/groups/1151036858806619*

5.4 What should the new UK Government do about Roads and Traffic?

This is a lengthy and somewhat technical article by Prof Phil Goodwin, but an excellent, very useful and informative read if you like this kind of thing!

We *tweeted* a few particularly interesting quotes from the article.

5.5 Dirty Deals

Report by Transform Scotland analysing how the Scottish Government's **City-Region Deals** with local councils "*are fuelling inequality, damaging the environment and undermining the country's climate commitments.*"

"£900 million of the £1300 million of Scottish City Region Deal spending on transport infrastructure is being spent on high carbon infrastructure that will lock people into unsustainable transport for decades to come." In our area this includes funding for Sheriffhall roundabout"

"Only £382 million (29% of the total) is being spent on sustainable and low carbon transport, with only the Stirling Deal committing all of its spending to low carbon projects."

5.6 Scot Govt Climate Targets Bill *– comments close 16 August*

The Scottish Government has missed 9 of its last 13 climate targets, according to *Stop Climate Chaos Scotland* (SCCS). The government has now published a Bill to change from 1-year targets to 5-year targets, and this is being *consulted on* by the Parliament's Committee on Net Zero, Energy and Transport. A 5-year target potentially gives the government much more wriggle-room, with a risk of 'leave things till next year and the next parliament' but on the other hand annual targets can be problematic given one-off occurrences in individual years.

Find out more, and give your views *here*. A short response is fine.

SCCS (of which Spokes is a member) has made a very detailed and semi-technical submission, *here*. Perhaps the main point is that even if there is a change to 5-year targets, there must be arrangements for "*regular monitoring, reporting and scrutiny of progress (at least annually) to assess the effectiveness of actions taken and develop recommendations to address any lack of progress.*"

6. Please consider volunteering!

6.1 Powerpoint loops

We'd need a volunteer to create some powerpoint loops we could use to run continuously at spokes stalls at conferences or other events. We would first use this for our stall at the Cycling Scotland conference on 8 October.

Our website has a host of pictures that could be used; for example from our **cargobike grant reports**, our **competition entries**, or our **history page**. Each loop, or each section, could consist of just an opening and closing text slide, sandwiching a set of relevant photos.

It would be necessary to resize some photos to avoid creating uncomfortably space-hungry powerpoint files, so we are looking for someone reasonably proficient with at least the basics.

One of many photos from our Shopping by Bike competition

6.2 Spokes Working Groups

Most Spokes activity happens through working groups which meet roughly monthly online. The two most central groups, **Planning** and **Resources**, have both lost a couple of regular members during the last year or so. This has a clear detrimental effect on Spokes activity: for example we can't respond to all relevant council and other consultations (see **here**); and we can't always organise stalls at community events.

Please do get in touch if you'd like to try joining Planning or Resources. Both have well-used email lists to keep in touch with ongoing issues between meetings. At meetings, don't be shy to butt in with your thoughts or asking anything that is unclear; groups are friendly and everyone starts by not really knowing what is going on!

Don't feel you don't know enough – it is by doing that you learn - and you would normally share with other members of the group. For example, on responding to a consultation in Planning Group, someone might draw up initial ideas, others could then comment and perhaps add useful references, leading to a final complete response.

Please respond as an individual to all consultations that concern you. Also copy to Spokes for our central response.

7. Edinburgh Consultations

7.1 Spaces For People bike lanes – *City Centre ETRO/21/26A ends 18.8.24, others end later*

The Spaces for People bike lanes and traffic restrictions are still legally valid under temporary Orders. In order to make them legally permanent (with any changes) the Council is introducing Experimental Traffic Orders, which include powers to deem them permanent (with or without changes) after a 6-month consultation period.

Unfortunately the **first attempt** (via consultants) to do this, in Jan 2023, failed because of a series of errors which meant that the draft Orders had to be withdrawn. Council officers are now drafting **the Orders** themselves. This is apparently quite complex, and time-consuming. They are now being published successively this Spring, numbered as shown, and in the order below. You can find more of the history **here**.

It is likely that many of the schemes will be retained largely as they are now, but with gradual improvements over the next few years, notably by replacing defenders with the low-cost dividers pictured in 4.7 above, and with improvements at junctions. *It would be really valuable for members to request such changes, either in general terms, or by commenting in detail on the basis of your local knowledge of particular schemes*.

- City Centre **ETRO/21/26A** – now published for comment, ends 18.8.24.
- East **ETRO/21/28A** – now published for comment, ends 28.10.24.
- West **ETRO/21/30A** & **ETRO/21/30B** – now published for comment, ends 16.12.24.
- North **ETRO/21/27A** **&** **ETRO/23/23** – now published for comment, ends 23.12.24.
- South **ETRO/21/29** – still to be published, **here**

Comments should be sent, by closing dates, to: **TRO.Consultations@edinburgh.gov.uk** quoting the relevant ETRO reference number(s) as above.

If you comment, please copy Spokes so we can consider including your points in the Spokes submission. We have not yet drawn up draft responses, but you can see our comments when the schemes were being installed **here** – they were done scheme by scheme, and only subsequently did the Council group them into 5 groups as above.

Latest: Because of the complexity of the above, the Council has created a new webpage covering all the schemes, with clearer maps, and the opportunity to comment more easily on any of the schemes. The address is.. **https://travellingsafely.commonplace.is/** Of course, Spokes is also keen to get your views so we can consider them for the main Spokes response, so please copy your comments to us, as far as possible.

8. Lothians Councils Consultations

8.1 Midlothian, Local Development Plan *(MLDP 2)* – *ends 1 October 2024* Consultation page

"Do you have views on where buildings should be allowed, how land should be used and where existing spaces and buildings should be protected? If yes, fill in the questionnaires"

Note that this includes land that you think should be safeguarded for active travel, other transport purposes or other purposes including recreation. "*Climate change will be a central consideration.*"

8.2 West Lothian Council - enquiries re new road & path developments – *no closing date*

The Council has a webpage for enquiries and comments about new roads, footpaths, and cycle routes; and also a page of current projects and completed consultations.

8.3 East Lothian Council – 'Call for Sites' – *ends 6 Sept 2024*

The Council is seeking suggestions for sites throughout the county for housing, economic development, allotment provision, community growing space, cemetery sites or sites suitable for renewable energy developments.

We need an end to housing developments located and designed such that you can only get to shopping and other services by car. So this is a good opportunity to suggest developments and locations where active travel and public transport can be well provided for. The consultation requests details about each site that you suggest, but you can leave blank any boxes where you don't have the relevant information. **Consultation webpage**.

9. More & future consultations *– Check council, government, and other sites*

- **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** **petitions.parliament.scot**
- **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!)
- **Spokes website** We have a page of particularly relevant consultations www.spokes.org.uk/consultns

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.