



conference newsletter

Velo-city
2001

2

summer 2000

ROUTES BOOST

Major new money for safer travel to schools

A SUBSTANTIAL financial injection for Scotland's safer routes to schools initiatives should mean that, by the time of Velo-city 2001, a significant change in the country's travel-to-school culture is underway. An extra £5.2 million will be spent in the current financial year on: traffic-calmed 20 mph zones; crossings for pedestrians and cyclists; provision of cycle lanes and pedestrian footpaths; traffic-free entrances to schools; and provision of secure cycle storage and locker facilities at schools.

In addition, a competition launched as part of the Velo-city 2001 outreach programme is involving hundreds of Scottish school children in devising ways that their own journeys to school can be made more cycle-friendly.

Announcing the new funding for safer routes for schools in March, Scotland's transport minister, Sarah Boyack MSP said: 'We want to encourage walking, cycling and better use of public transport as safe

ways to get to school. Reducing the number of cars on the school run will mean less congestion and pollution. It will also bring health benefits as a result of increased levels of physical activity. It is right that the safety of children on their way to school is a priority for parents. The days when all children can quite easily make their own way to school are unfortunately no longer with us. But the school car run has brought new dangers – increased traffic near our schools, increased pollution and less exercise for children.'

The minister also expressed her hope that the additional money would enable local authorities to help meet the target of reducing child deaths and serious injuries on our roads by 50 per cent by 2010.

Boyack also voiced her enthusiasm for children participating in competitions to encourage them to create their own travel safety initiatives. The 'schools challenge'



being run by the Velo-city 2001 outreach programme invites all schools in central Scotland to just this. Sponsorship from the Royal Bank of Scotland means that schools whose pupils come up with good ideas to boost cycling will receive funding to enact their plans. The winners of this competition will be part of the initiative to broaden Velo-city 2001 beyond the delegates. They children themselves will make presentations to the conference and there will be opportunities to visit the schools in question.

Velo-city 2001 Tracks

NOW IS the time to think about the contribution you could make to Velo-city 2001. The formal call for abstracts will be issued in August 2001, but to help you start thinking we have outlined the five main themes.

Contact Erl Wilkie, the Conference Director (erl.wilkie@land.glasgow.gov.uk) if you need further details or want to discuss how your idea might fit in.

Tourism and economy How can we realise the tourism potential of long distance cycle routes such as the North Sea route and other local and national networks?

Children and mobility How do we redirect the next generation away from the car culture and encourage them to cycle, starting with safer routes to school?

Health and well being We all know that cycling is a wonderful route to physical and

mental health – how do we spread the message and overcome fears about safety?

Environment and land use In creating new communities and adapting existing neighbourhoods, how can we make the conditions right for cyclists and pedestrians?

Sustainable transport and planning How can mainstreaming cycling and promoting best practice at local and national level assist people to adopt the bicycle lifestyle?



Jam Busters

Glasgow transport and education work together to beat the school run

FOR EVERY cycling lane by the side of a road, for every extra railing erected on a pavement to make parking bicycles easier, for every transport initiative done in the name of cycling, the hope is that after Velo-city 2001 visits Scotland next year, it will be a case of 'you ain't seen nothing yet'.

As director of Velo-city 2001 and a cycling officer with the City of Glasgow Council, it has already been an exciting few months preparing for next year. But while the atmosphere of the conference will be distinctly cosmopolitan, Velo-city 2001 intends to retain a strong link with the people of Scotland. That's why there will be a mass participation cycle ride between the two cities during the conference.

That is why Velo-city 2001 is already inviting school children to come up with ideas to make cycling safer and more fun, the best ideas to be showcased at the conference.

Velo-city 2001 is in Scotland partly because of the pioneering work of cycle campaign groups in the two cities as well as the charity, Sustrans, the organisation behind the opening this month of 5,000 miles of cycle routes throughout the UK. If there is a single aim of Velo-city 2001, it is this: great work has already been done to raise the profile of cycling, to make it more popular and safer. But there is still lots to do and if, by coming to Edinburgh and Glasgow, the world's most important cycling conference can be the catalyst for even more improvements, then it could prove to one of the most significant Velo-city conferences ever held.

GLASGOW CITY Council has successfully helped to create safer routes to schools as part of its efforts to improve the health of children and to reduce the traffic burden of the 'school run'. Work to date, however, has been piecemeal. But now a new initiative will develop travel plans for every school run by the authority and, by so doing, bring together the planning of education and transport in the city as well as improving children's health.

A recent paper by Alan Malcolm, the council's senior depute director of land services, sets out how this initiative will work. A dedicated member-officer forum will be created with the aim of keeping decisions about school transport planning at the heart of wider transport policy formulation. At the same time it will also seek to shift attitudes towards travel among all Glasgow school children.

This initiative will build on Glasgow's successful 'Fit for Life' programme that encouraged school children themselves to consider how safer routes to school might be created. Crucially, this programme brought together health promotion and educational work – a groundbreaking piece of policy integration and an example upon which the school travel plans policy will build.

There will be three strands to the new forum's work. Transportation and educational polices will be brought into alignment so that both support the principles of school travel plans. Corporate working will be encouraged with the provision of guidance on the production



Photo: Chris Hill

and implementation of school travel plans. And, examples of good practice will be disseminated to encourage wider participation.

The idea of travel plans was initially applied to employers. They have been encouraged to examine the travel to work modes of employees to provide the information to enable them to help achieve a shift towards walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

The preparation of school travel plans, which clearly set out local problems and solutions within the framework of Glasgow's policies and objectives, should prove invaluable because they encourage corporate working and help raise awareness of the issues to be addressed. The plans themselves will review current travel practices and help develop sustainable transport initiatives allied to classroom work, roads and traffic management measures with crucial input from parents and schools management.

By the time of Velo-city 2001 this work should be substantially advanced. Delegates will be invited to see its results first-hand.

School Route to Family Cycling

PUPILS FROM Scottish secondary schools will have their say at next year's Velo-city conference, thanks to an outreach competition sponsored by The Royal Bank of Scotland.

A Challenge has been sent out to the 200 secondary schools in central Scotland, seeking ideas for projects to encourage family cycling that could be undertaken

during the coming school year.

All schools answering this challenge will receive a workshop cycle maintenance set. The best of these ideas will be carried out during the 2000-2001 school session. Challenge schools will also be linked up with partners in other European countries to swap ideas and information.

All this work will culminate in a special

session at Velo-city 2001, when the 13-14 year old pupils will present their findings in front of an international audience. To further promote the two-way flow of information, experts attending the conference will be invited to visit challenge schools and talk about their own work in cycle planning and promotion.

For further details of the School Challenge contact Ian Maxwell on +44 (0)131 669 6542 or imaxwell@gn.apc.org

GoBike! and Spokes

WERE IT not for the grassroots activism of two campaign groups, Scotland would still be stuck in first gear as far as cycling infrastructure is concerned.

Edinburgh-based Spokes (the Lothian cycle campaign) and Glasgow-based GoBike! (Strathclyde cycle campaign) can lay claim to some impressive achievements, whether it is turning around reluctant local politicians or the apportioning of parts of the road network exclusively for the use of cyclists.

It may feel like the dark ages, but it was only in 1978 when a local politician in Edinburgh felt he could get away with describing, in a national newspaper, the then newly-formed Spokes as Communists. As it turned out, councillor Ralph Brereton could not have delivered more recruits to Spokes had he devoted the remainder of his political life to standing on a street corner handing out Spokes leaflets.

Both Spokes and GoBike! are hot on running recreational cycling trips, producing cycle route maps, publishing information-packed newsletters, running cycling festivals, keeping a watchful eye on central and local government transport initiatives and maintaining busy websites. They are also involved in the creation or restoration of dedicated cycle paths.

In other words, the stuff of an active, committed membership. Spokes boasts 1,200 members, GoBike! 300 – GoBike!'s

fewer numbers reflecting the fact that, partly because of its greater density of car traffic, Glasgow has less of a cycling tradition than Edinburgh.

Said Spokes co-ordinator, Dave du Feu: "As the largest environmental campaign group in Edinburgh, Spokes will be proud to show our achievements at Velo-city 2001, but we also want to learn from the experience of those who will be attending the conference."

Spokes still considers one of its biggest breakthroughs to have been in 1987 when it persuaded the then local authority, Lothian region, to appoint a three-person full-time cycling unit within the highways department, with a six-figure budget at its disposal. Like Spokes, GoBike! was founded in the 1970s, initially as the Glasgow cycling campaign, then relaunched as the Strathclyde cycle campaign in the 1990s before it took its current name.

Said David Palmar, editor of the GoBike! newsletter: "GoBike! is part of an important growing movement, promoting cycling as an enjoyable, healthy, leisure activity, and most of all as a sustainable, non-polluting form of transport. We want to encourage a modal shift away from motorways, traffic jams, heavy lorries and over-dependence on the motor car, towards public transport and cycling wherever possible."

For more information,
visit the web-sites www.spokes.org.uk
and www.gobike.org

Essential bridge work

New bridges for cyclists are springing up all over Edinburgh at the moment. Pictured is a new crossing at Crewe Toll that makes a major shopping centre accessible without having to negotiate a busy road. In the new Exchange business district another new crossing has been in place for some time and will soon create a link between areas of high employment that are free from heavy traffic. And, in Midlothian, £1 million has been committed to a new cyclists' bridge over the Sheriffhall roundabout. It is an



Photo: Chris Eardley

example of partnership in action that should be open by the time of Velo-city 2001 – funding will come from the Scottish Executive, Midlothian Council and Scottish National Heritage.

Roond the Watter

MILLIONS OF people are soon to find themselves living within a few miles of one of the world's longest dedicated cycle routes, connecting over half a dozen European countries.

The North Sea Cycle Route, joining seven countries with a North Sea coastline, is to open next year and will be 6,000 km in length – excluding water. As an indication of the project's scale, an estimated eight million people will have the route pass their front door.

The route is a recognition that cycle tourism is an important part of the active holiday market, and, as such, will be highlighted in a tourism and economy strand of the Velo-city 2001 conference.

The idea of a route connecting Scotland, England, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Norway was hatched only in September 1998. Bringing it about has required a high degree of co-operation between local and regional authorities, highways authorities and tourist boards. It is coming to fruition relatively quickly because there is little need for new cycle path construction above what has already been taking place in the individual countries.

In the Scottish region of Fife, the Route links into one of the UK's most comprehensive networks of signed and safe cycle routes. Totalling 500km, both on and off road, the Fife network boasts five urban, 11 recreational and 12 forest circuits. The route is one of a dozen long-distance routes that will criss-cross Europe that are co-ordinated by the European Cyclists' Federation.

Said Stuart Knowles, the main Scottish partner: "The route will capture the imagination, the cross-cultural links will help us learn more from each other and there will be economic benefits from the tourism. For very little investment, there will be big benefits."

The route is to be launched with two cycle tours, each leaving Hamburg in Germany and each arriving in Aberdeen, Scotland. On 5 May, one journey heads for Scotland via Holland and England. On the same day, another departs for Scotland via Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The journeys meet for a celebration 50 days later on 23 June. Four months later, at Velo-city 2001, there will be cause for even more celebration.

Visit www.northsea-cycle.com
for more information.

Diary

August 2000 Call for Papers for Velo-city 2001 conference. Details: 0141-434 1500.

17 September Pedal for Scotland Ride from Glasgow to Edinburgh. The second year of running it. Next year's version will be the curtain-raiser for Velo-city 2001. It is 50 miles from George Square in Glasgow to the Edinburgh finish. Registration phone details, web site and finish are being finalised. The address is Pedal for Scotland, PO Box 13873 Portobello, Edinburgh EH15 3YE. Twelve charities are set to benefit this year. www.pedalforScotland.co.uk

18-22 September Change Travel Week. A programme of incentives to convince car users on to alternative forms of transport. Where? Edinburgh and the Lothians. Organised by ACTIVE for SAMH, the mental health charity. Details: 0131-467 7905.

22 September Car-Free Day UK. In 1999, over 166 towns in Germany, France and Italy became partially or totally car-free for the day. This year, the UK joins in. Details from Richard Evans at the Environmental Transport Association on 020 8946 0912 www.22September.org or www.eta.co.uk

November 2000 Deadline for conference Papers for Velo-city 2001 to be submitted. Details: 0141-434 1500.



**Velo-city
2001**

17-21 September 2001 Velo-city international cycling conference in Edinburgh and Glasgow. See you there!

Items for Dates for Diary can be e-mailed to mwilsport@aol.com

Conference Partners

City of Edinburgh Council; Glasgow City Council; The Scottish Executive; GoBike!; Spokes; Scottish Cycling Development Project; Cyclists' Touring Club; Sustrans; European Cyclists' Federation.

Contacts

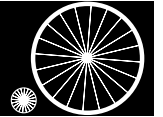
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Cycle Roots Scotland's Cycling History



Dunlop

WITHOUT THE Ayrshire-born vet, John Boyd Dunlop, it is unlikely that the bicycle would have won many friends. Nor, for that matter would aeroplanes and cars have had such an easy ride had it not been for his innovation – the pneumatic tyre.

Dunlop used rubber in his surgical procedures, but in 1887 he turned his attention to making the ride on his son's tricycle a little more comfortable. He fabricated a tube using 1/32 inch rubber and secured it to a wooden disk using a strip of linen. Almost immediately Dunlop realised that his tyre had the potential to be faster than the solid rubber tyres with which all bikes at that time were fitted.

Curiously he was not in fact the first Scot to have come up with this idea. In 1845 Robert Thomson had patented an almost identical invention. Thomson's variant had not caught on, however, and Dunlop had no knowledge of his work when he started his own experiments. Nevertheless, it took a court case to settle matters in Dunlop's favour.

Initially his tyres found few friends. To accommodate the fat inflatable tyres cycle manufacturers had to completely retool – so they initially resisted making the change. It was the competitive advantage that first brought the inflatable tyre to real prominence. Although they were widely mocked – the tyres were known as 'bladder-wheels', windbags' and pudding



wheels'. But no one could deny the advantage they bestowed in competition. In 1899 W Hume won all four bicycle races at the Queen's College Sports Stadium and Belfast on Dunlop's tyres. A few months later, he swept the board at a similar event in Liverpool and soon the pneumatic tyre was in massive demand. Dunlop consolidated his position in the market by buying other patents, like that of another Scot Charles Kingston Welch, who came up with the idea of having a separate detachable tyre and inner tube. Despite apparently acting so shrewdly, however, the Ayrshire man did not make much money from his invention. He sold the business and its patents after only a few years, but the Dunlop Rubber Company that he founded still bears his name.

Velo-city 2001 Mailing List Fax-back Form

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