

SPIN

CYCLING IN SCOTLAND
autumn_2012



VIVA LA REVOLUTION!

SCOTLAND DEMANDS
BETTER CYCLE FACILITIES

SPIN CHATS TO PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT

CYCLE ROUTES

TWO AMAZING ROUTES FOR
A GREAT AUTUMN CYCLE

FRESHNLO PEDAL FOR SCOTLAND

NEW TOUGH SPORTIVE
ROUTE

there was a time...

...not too long ago when thinking of something new to say about the quest to increase levels of cycling in any kind of regular report or column would leave you scrabbling desperately around for some kind of tenuous angle to put a different spin on what you'd said countless times before. It wasn't that progress hadn't been made, it'd just been pretty slow and steady.

Yet in the 5 months since the last issue of SPIN came out, so much has happened it feels like cycling is on a new path to success. The PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT demonstration, which you can read all about on page 6, has completely reignited cycling as a social and political issue. The Times has run the most high profile media campaign about cycling ever seen in Britain and brought the issues cyclists face on our roads into the forefront of debate. Bradley Wiggins' amazing Tour de France success, and the huge gold medal haul by Team GB at the London Olympics has given cycling an enormous boost in popularity. The modal share for cycling to school has risen again and now stands a 4% of all journeys to primary school. And the message about the importance of funding also seems to be getting through in places, with the City of Edinburgh Council recently committing 5% of its transport budget to cycling projects.

All of this amazing momentum is happening at the same time as Cycling Scotland is reviewing the progress made in the 2 years since the publication of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland, and reporting back to Transport Scotland about what needs to be revised or added to help reach the target of 10% of all trips being made by bike by 2020.

So these are exciting times for cyclists. We'll do our best to keep you up to date on what's happening in these pages, but with things moving so fast we also recommend keeping an eye on twitter.com/cyclingscotland or like us on Facebook for a regular news feed on all things cycling.

IAN AITKEN
Cycling Scotland Chief Executive



“ SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF SPIN CAME OUT, SO MUCH HAS HAPPENED IT FEELS LIKE CYCLING IS ON A NEW PATH TO SUCCESS ”



FRESHNLO PEDAL FOR SCOTLAND returns with tougher Sportive

SCOTLAND'S BIGGEST bike ride returns on 9 September this year, so there's still time to register for freshnlo Pedal for Scotland online, or you can enter on the day. The ride offers two routes this year, as the classic 47 mile Challenge Ride returns for its 14th year, and the Sportive Ride returns with a new tougher route. The Challenge Ride remains a fantastic day out for cyclists of all ages and abilities and is perfect for groups of friends, family or workmates to share a fun and active day out.

The Sportive however, aims to really put serious riders to the test. The new route adds an extra 16 miles to the ride that will feature a daunting 2400m of ascent, meaning that over the 110 miles cyclists will climb the equivalent of Alpe D'Huez twice over.

The route features several prominent climbs including the Transmitter Road by Galston which provides stunning views across the Ayrshires and a tricky descent overlooking Loudoun Hill. The toughest climb, the 'Carmichaelberg', is famous for its steepness with an average gradient of 13%. Whilst not steep, the gradual ascent of the LangWhang will test the legs after 90miles of riding.

REGISTER TODAY AT

www.pedalforScotland.org
or head to Glasgow Green on
Sunday 9 September and
register on the day.

GOOGLE MAPS LAUNCH CYCLE JOURNEY PLANNER

WEB BEHEMOTHS Google have updated their online mapping to enable users to plan cycle journeys. You can now drop in any two postcodes and have Google maps find you a point-to-point route to get to your destination by bike. The service launched in beta form

a few months ago, and whilst early tests by the SPIN team found the planner didn't really take much account of cyclists' needs or local bike infrastructure, it does seem to be improving and has had the input of Sustrans' mapping team to make sure the NCN and local links

are featured. At the moment the SPIN team reckon CycleStreets.net still has the edge over this, but with Google's considerable resources it should be worth keeping an eye on how this very welcome piece of web functionality develops.

autumn CYCLE ROUTES

TRAVEL WRITER FERGAL MACERLEAN PICKS HIS FAVOURITE RIDES FOR AN AUTUMN CYCLE



Views of Loch Lomond enjoyed from the cycleway

WHETHER YOU'RE A NOVICE OR A MORE EXPERIENCED CYCLIST IT'S AMAZING THE BREADTH OF ROUTES AVAILABLE RIGHT HERE IN CENTRAL SCOTLAND.



Resting by the Loch Lomond cycleway

AND THIS TIME of year is one of the best for getting out and about. Geese and wildfowl are arriving, the leaves are putting on their annual display of colour and the air has a certain energy to help you along. Crisp autumn days in the saddle really are ideal as you explore new scenes ... while your legs, body and mind get revitalized.

In tandem with two routes outlined here – one by Loch Lomond cyclepaths, the other on country roads in Stirling's Ochils – you can take the train for a relaxing and environmentally friendly day out.

ScotRail takes bikes for free. Space is limited but booking in advance is simple. See their website for everything you need to know at www.scotrail.co.uk/cycling. If you try the routes and like them there's a bundle more in Bike Scotland: Book One with forty on- and off-road routes of varying difficulty and length, ranging from an easy 20km to a committing 130km. And all of the routes start within an hour's train-ride or so from the cities of central Scotland.

HAPPY PEDALING!
Fergal MacErlean



SAVE 20% ON BIKE SCOTLAND!

If you enjoy these routes and want to try out some more, you can pick up a copy of Fergal's Bike Scotland Book One and choose from loads more at www.pocketmountain.com

As an exclusive offer for SPIN readers, enter **CSOFFER** at the checkout, or bring this copy of **SPIN** to the Pocket Mountain stall at freshno Pedal for Scotland and SAVE 20%.

START
BALLOCH,
WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE

FINISH
TARBET, ARGYLL

DISTANCE
27KM (ONE-WAY)

TIME
2.5 HOURS

MAP
OS LANDRANGER 56, 63

TERRAIN
FLAT; TRAFFIC-FREE
CYCLEPATH



BALLOCH TO TARBET

Pedalling by Loch Lomond's banks is without doubt the finest way to see the bonnie loch. And with a 27km (17-mile) traffic-free cycle path laid out to follow, it couldn't be simpler.

This follows sections of the old main road, from Balloch to Tarbet, passing through many of the wilder sections of Loch Lomond's western shore. Much of the route also runs parallel to the busy A82 on a dedicated well surfaced cycle path. To enjoy it at its best try to choose a quiet time.

From Balloch train station turn right and then left through a car park and into a park. Continue to the National Park Gateway Centre and Loch Lomond Shores. After this keep going straight to join the Old Luss Road, via a short cycle path, and turn right. The cycle path is well marked with blue Sustrans signs as Regional Route 40.

At a roundabout for Cameron House Hotel take the second turning to reach Duck Bay Marina and enjoy views of the expansive lower loch. Inchmurrin, the largest of the loch's 20-odd named islands, draws the eye. Christian monks settled here, as they did on several other islands. A chapel, dedicated to St Mirren, was built on the island's southern end.

Above the far side of the loch rounded Conic Hill, the remnant of a once fiery volcano, rises. Inchmurrin, Conic Hill, and other islands in between all stand on a major geological formation, the Highland Boundary Fault.

The route returns to the cycle path by the main road and passes the Arden roundabout. Pedal on before following a fine section which weaves by the densely wooded Inchtavannach. An old road runs to this island's summit and may have been used to facilitate oak extraction. Large quantities of oak were sent down the River Leven, by Balloch, to produce charcoal which powered the iron foundries and as a source of tannin which was used in the preparation of leather and ink.

Further on, at a T-junction, keep right for the old road which leads into the village of Luss, which is reached after around an hour. There's a good coffee shop near the pier. It's worth going to the end of the pier for great views both up and down the loch. You could turn back from here but it's well worth continuing.

Back on the road take the turn to the Lodge Hotel and find the cycle path again which drops down by the loch shore. The character of the

loch changes as it narrows and the hillsides become steeper.

When you come to Inverbeg bear round to the left and take an upper path. Ben Lomond looms across the loch and ahead juts Rubha Mór (big headland). Those of a certain age will remember driving along this old twisting road where the road markings are rapidly fading. The deepest point of the freshwater loch – the largest in Britain – at nearly 190m lies close by.

The last section, into Tarbet (where the cyclepath ends), returns by the A82. At the village you have the choice of retracing the route. Or, continuing to Tarbet train station (1km on-road (footpath) on A83) to catch a Glasgow bound train (for Balloch change at Dumbarton Central).

Whatever you do, choose a fine day and you can bank on a bonnie time.



DISTANCE
14KM

TIME
2-3 HOURS

MAP
OS LANDRANGER 57

TERRAIN
UNDULATING, WITH ONE
LONG CLIMB. MINOR
ROADS



DUNBLANE TO SHERRIFMUIR



A surprisingly tough route up into the Ochils and down through fern clad gorges on quiet minor roads.

The route begins at Dunblane train station. Go up the High Street, turning right at a mini-roundabout. At the next roundabout, go straight to start a long climb up to the moorlands of Sherrifmuir. After 500m you leave residential Dunblane behind and the gradient eases.

At the next junction, turn left. The climb is not over yet, however, and another steep section begins. Views of the dome-shaped munro Ben Vorlich and its steadfast companion Stuc a'Chroin open on your left.

At last you reach a welcoming downhill stretch which leads to a

memorial. This was erected by Clan MacRae in memory of their fallen at the Battle of Sheriffmuir, in 1715. The MacRaes, who formed part of the left wing of the highland army, were annihilated. The battle itself was indecisive, leaving the English and Scots to nurse their wounds.

The road climbs again, albeit gently. The gently rounded sheepshorn Ochils lie ahead. After 1.5km the road joins the ancient Perth-Stirling drovers road where there is a good pub (The Sherrifmuir Inn) offering food and diversions for kids, if open. Relax in the knowledge that this is the highpoint of the route. Look out for a solitary standing stone on the moor. It is part of a group but the others have keeled over.

Once replenished, head downhill, crossing the Wharry Burn on a picture postcard little bridge. For the next 3.5km the road wends its way across the moorland. Great views of Dumyat – the Ochils' most popular hill – open up after a while.

Pass Dumyat on your left. Ahead you catch a glimpse of the

industrialized midland valley before the road descends before rising briefly. Then follows a much steeper tree-covered stretch. Slow down where a road joins on the right and continue down a steep gorge.

At the bottom, on the flat, pass the walls of Stirling University, to come to a T-junction. Turn right onto a residential road. Continue straight ahead through leafy Bridge of Allan. After 750m the road joins another which runs downhill to the main street. Turn right to exit the village. Cross the bridge and continue for 300m to reach the train station's pedestrian entrance from where you can catch a train back to Dunblane – a more enjoyable option than continuing by bike.



PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT

the

REVOLUTION *will not be* MOTORISED

FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER, CYCLING LOOKED LIKE A TOPIC THAT COULD INFLUENCE VOTERS, AND TOOK A CONSIDERABLE STEP UP THE POLITICAL AGENDA.



ACCORDING TO the scientific boffins at the Social Cognitive Networks Academic Research Center in New York, when just 10 percent of the population holds an unshakable belief, their belief will always be adopted by the majority of the society. Apparently, 10% is the tipping point where a minority belief becomes the majority opinion.

Exactly what percentage of people think that Scotland needs better facilities for cyclists is not clear*, but the events of recent months seem to indicate it's a lot more than you might have thought. An amazing 3000 people took part in the **PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT** demonstration on April 28th. That's a phenomenal amount of people for any Scottish demonstration (the largest seems to be the public sector pension cuts demo from last November with 10,000), especially one calling for better cycling facilities.

The reasons behind the demonstration were grave - 4 cyclists lost their lives on Edinburgh's roads during the space of a few months. Although statistically the roads are becoming safer for cyclists, this string of tragedies in such close succession served as a wake up call. The amazing turnout at **PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT**

showed the Scottish Government that if it was going to achieve its Cycling Action Plan vision of getting to its own magic tipping point, where 10% of journeys are made by bike and cycling is then adopted by the mainstream, the roads were going to have to get a lot more cycle-friendly.

Nevertheless, the huge turnout for the event came as a surprise to the organisers, who expected 1000 people at best, and also, one assumes, to Scotland's politicians. For the first time ever, cycling looked like a topic that could influence voters, and took a considerable step up the political agenda.

This surge in grassroots support for cycling was also concurrently matched by support from the media, as The Times launched its Cities Fit for Cycling campaign after one of their reporters was seriously injured whilst cycling to work.

Both **PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT** and the Times saw fit to dictate the terms of the revolution, each producing a manifesto calling for a variety of measures to make the roads a safer place for cyclists. Both manifestos call for similar measures - a mixture of better cycle infrastructure, traffic calming, increased funding and improved road user training.

PEDAL ON PARLIAMENT MANIFESTO

1 PROPER FUNDING FOR CYCLING

2 DESIGN CYCLING INTO SCOTLAND'S ROADS

3 SAFER SPEEDS WHERE PEOPLE LIVE, WORK AND PLAY

4 INTEGRATE CYCLING INTO LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGIES

5 SENSIBLE ROAD TRAFFIC LAW AND ENFORCEMENT

6 REDUCE THE RISK OF HGVs TO CYCLISTS AND PEDESTRIANS

7 A STRATEGIC AND JOINED-UP PROGRAMME OF ROAD USER TRAINING

8 SOLID RESEARCH ON CYCLING TO SUPPORT POLICY-MAKING

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO SIGN UP TO THE POP MANIFESTO - GO TO PEDALONPARLIAMENT.ORG AND SHOW YOUR SUPPORT



To get the inside story on this breakthrough in cycle campaigning, **SPIN** sat down with the organiser of Pedal on Parliament David Brennan to ask him what inspired him to stage the biggest cycling demonstration in Scotland's history...

SPIN: What inspired you to put on Pedal on Parliament?

David: The seed was sewn for POP when I first heard of a hit and run incident where a cyclist was killed not far from my work last year. This brought home to me how vulnerable cyclists can be. Then when I heard of two other cyclists being killed in Edinburgh earlier this year I knew something had to be done. Also being the father of 3 young children who were starting to take an interest in cycling I realised that the roads were not a safe place for them to cycle. That to me seemed completely wrong. The roads should be for everyone, not just those who decide to use a car. Then came the Cities Safe for Cycling campaign in The Times which changed the environment for cycle campaigners. The media in general suddenly became very interested in the cycling safety story creating opportunities for new campaigns to blossom.

The Big Ride in London was announced, but I realised that that would have little impact in Scotland due to devolution. We needed an event north of the border to show politicians here that cycling safety was important in Scotland.

How did the event come together - were you working alone or with a group?

I initially contacted two online campaigners that I trusted and asked them if they thought the idea of a big ride in Edinburgh would work. Sally Hinchcliffe and Kim Harding both agreed that it was a great idea so I blogged about the idea and we set to work. Over the next few days the core organising group grew to eight very diverse cyclists. The team worked together over the next couple of months amazingly well with each of us bringing something different to the table. The work they did was amazing, I can't thank them enough. However, we also had many other volunteers and helpers without whom the event would never have happened, all of which were recruited either online or through word of mouth. This was truly an event for cyclists organised by cyclists.

Was it challenging to organise?

None of the core team had ever organised anything like this before. Whilst we certainly did get advice from others, we had to learn as we went along and we certainly made a few mistakes. However, looking back at how successful the event was I think the team and the volunteers can be proud of the achievement. What we lacked in experience we made up for with enthusiasm and hard work. We all organised this in our own time around our work and family lives.

What was your reaction when you saw the turnout on the day?

I was totally shocked at the turnout. I was ambitious from the start and I remember thinking it would be amazing if we could get 1000 cyclists to turn up. However, this was my dream and in reality I thought somewhere between 300 to 500 would turn up. I remember on the day being a little concerned about 20 minutes before the ride was due to set off. It didn't seem that busy to me.



For the next 15 minutes I was busy chatting to folk and organising a few of the final details. I then turned around and looked down the Meadows and realised that cyclists had appeared out of nowhere and stretched right down to the end of the park and way around the corner. There were at least 3000 cyclists of all shapes, sizes and ages. I knew from that moment on that POP was going to be a huge success.

How did you decide on the 8 point manifesto? Was it informed by your own experiences as a cyclist?

The manifesto took shape from a document that Kim Harding originally wrote. From there, the core group worked on the wording, with advice from other organisations, and other grass root cyclists. We did our best to listen

to as many views as possible in writing the document and I think that is borne out in the almost universal approval of the manifesto. Our one guiding principle was that it should make cycling safe for all - not only for current cyclists but potential future cyclists as well.

How many people have signed up?

We had nearly 4000 signatures on our petition.

What's next for Pedal on Parliament?

The POP event certainly opened the eyes of politicians, and opened a few political doors. In fact Alex Salmond in a radio interview suggested we were 'pushing against an open door'. Not only have we had discussions with the Transport Minister Keith Brown, we have taken part in the newly set up Cross Party Cycling Group, and have presented in parliament. The politicians are certainly listening. However, despite our country's politicians supporting our aims, there has been no new money or new initiatives



CYCLE FRIENDLY SECONDARY SCHOOLS LAUNCHED



FOLLOWING ON from the huge success of the Cycle Friendly School Award (over 140 schools awarded to date covering over 33,000 pupils) Cycling Scotland has launched a new award for secondary schools. Transport Minister Keith Brown MSP presented the very first Cycle Friendly Secondary School Award to Larbert High School earlier this year.

Find out more at cyclingscotland.org

CAMPAIGN



GIVE ME CYCLE SPACE GOES NATIONAL...

Cycling Scotland's successful driver awareness campaign Give Me Cycle Space was rolled out nationally this year thanks to Transport Scotland funding. Working in partnership with 12 local authorities and using national TV and radio advertising, the campaign had an amazing impact with post-campaign research showing over 90% awareness of the message amongst parents and drivers, and a positive shift in attitudes to cycling on the road.

Watch the TV ad on our YouTube channel: youtube.com/user/CyclingScotland2010

CAPS REPORT DUE OUT SOON

IT'S BEEN JUST over two years since the Scottish Government launched its plan to get 10% of all journeys in Scotland made by bike. Cycling Scotland has drafted a report on progress towards the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland (CAPS) target which is currently being circulated before publication in the autumn. Keep an eye on our website for the published report which tracks progress towards a 10% modal share for cycling and makes recommendations on how CAPS could be updated and improved.

MAKING CYCLING MAINSTREAM COURSES AVAILABLE

CYCLING SCOTLAND'S popular professional development courses for local authority staff and those working in cycle promotion are currently being offered free of charge. Courses on planning and designing infrastructure, marketing cycling, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and targets, travel planning and more are available.

Contact peterleslie@cyclingscotland.org

SEND US YOUR INFRASTRUCTURE PICTURES!

INFRASTRUCTURE IS a key part of boosting cycling levels, and to help us highlight best practice, Cycling Scotland is putting out a call for photos of great Scottish cycle infrastructure. Facebook us, or email William@cyclingscotland.org with your pic and a location postcode, plus 50 words on how the infrastructure is changing behaviour. We'll compile the photos to display at our November conference.



FREE ENGINEERING ADVICE

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND has provided funding to allow Cycling Scotland's engineers to provide 90 hours of free advice to organisations or community groups. Last year advice was offered on shared-use signing, on-road cycle lanes through a town centre, cycle parking and soft measures at a shopping centre and community group advice.

If interested please contact Campbell McCall at campbellmccall@cyclingscotland.org

ADVERTISE IN SPIN

Over 12,000 people across Scotland receive a copy of SPIN, call 0141 229 5350 to advertise in the next issue.