

Active Transport in Edinburgh

✘ by Councillor Gordon Mackenzie, Convener of the Transport, Infrastructure and Environment Committee, The City of Edinburgh Council.

The recent announcement that City of Edinburgh Council has committed to spend a minimum of 5% of its roads and transport budget on cycling has been warmly welcomed by many campaigners. [‘Edinburgh sets new standard’](#) was the way SPOKES, a Lothian based cycle campaign group, responded to the news.

The detail of the announcement goes further by committing the percentage to increase annually by 1%. For the year ahead the 5% equates to around £1m, a significant increase on the £600k which was allocated this year. This is in addition to any external funding the Council manages to attract, such as The Scottish Government’s Cycling, Walking & Safer Streets fund, Sustrans funding and developer contributions.

The funding will be used to progress work aimed at meeting the requirements of the Charter of Brussels and the Council’s [‘Active Travel Action Plan’](#) (ATAP). In summary, the target is to increase the percentage of all journeys by bike in Edinburgh from 2% today to 10% by 2020. The target for journeys to work by bike is 15% of all journeys, up from around 5-6% today.

This approach has been tried and tested elsewhere in Europe, including, for any doubters, cities that are colder, wetter or hillier than Edinburgh. Better provision for cyclists, on road and off, safer routes, a wider promotion of cycling and raising the awareness of cyclists among other road users are key to the success of the strategy. These can only be achieved through sustained investment, hence the decision to commit a percentage of the road and transport budget to cycling.

The Council are currently implementing several projects as

part of the wider ATAP. Next month a 20mph limit will be introduced for most residential streets across a large swathe of south Edinburgh, the first Quality Bike Corridor in Edinburgh, between Potterrow and the King's Buildings, to provide a high quality continuous route for cyclists of all ages and ability.



Councillor Mackenzie
speaking to cyclists at the
Edinburgh Bike Breakfast
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Another initiative will see the pilot of on-street cycle storage facilities in tenemental areas beginning later in the year. These projects are in addition to the ongoing work of identifying and improving the junctions which are most difficult for pedestrians and cyclists, providing cycling training for P6, developing safer routes to school, targetting employers to encourage more of their staff to walk or cycle to work and getting all of us to leave the car behind for short journeys.

All in all, Active Travel, is about to get a lot more active!



You can read the Active Travel Action Plan here.

[Active Travel Action Plan April 11](#)