

Opinion – Trams and bikes – do they mix?

by Andy Arthur



So Princes Street in Edinburgh has been shut for around 2 or 3 years (I've lost count) and this is the THIRD attempt to lay the tram lines and surface.



The last two attempts quickly broke up under the pressure of cold winters and the weight of Edinburgh's fleet of low-floor, 15 tonne, 2-axle buses rumbling constantly across them (the designers imagined that the Trams would replace the buses. They won't. And never will.)



The tram lines have also proven to be a nightmare for cyclists – set in smooth concrete or rough setts, with buses and taxis forcing your line and on dark and wet nights, many a cyclist has fallen victim to them and broken their pride, their bones and their bikes. It was apparent that the people behind Edinburgh's tram had made absolutely zero allowance in their thinking around how cyclists might “interact” with tram lines when forced across them at shallow angles by poor road design and by other road users.



With much fanfare, Princes Street is to be opened to traffic this weekend. So what do we find?



Badly repaired surfaces and thoughtlessly dangerous “cycle

lanes” and Advanced Stop Reservoirs strung across the tracks. It will be a matter of days before another cyclist is brought down here.

I’m appalled.

✘ *Andy Arthur is a supporter of [POP Scotland](#). He designed the illustrations for the campaign which resulted in 3,000 cyclists pedalling to Parliament in April to raise awareness of the need for safety measures to encourage cycling on Scotland’s roads and streets. He also LOVES cycling. You may see all of his photographs on [Flickr](#).*