

Meeting Daisy Narayanan – driving the City Centre Transformation project

1. Who are you, and where did you come from?

I am Daisy Narayanan, Deputy Director, Sustrans Scotland, currently seconded to The City of Edinburgh Council. I am an architect and urban designer, originally from India, but now very much an adopted Scot. I live in Edinburgh with my author husband and two feisty little ones.



Daisy Narayanan speaking at the SPOKES summer meeting

2. What was the defining moment on your career path?

Having worked as an architect for a few years, I decided to take a career break and pursue a post-graduate degree at the University of Edinburgh. It was here that I found my way into the environmental design sector leading to my role with Sustrans.

3. How do you spend your spare time?

Out and about with my family enjoying the wonderful Scottish landscapes. Reading to my little girl is my daily joy, I learn so much from her – a 4 year-old's view of the world is very interesting!

4. What makes Edinburgh the best location for you to live and/or work?

Its compact size, you can get around virtually anywhere in the city by foot or bike. Its celebration and embrace of diversity and of course, its magnificent architecture – it would be very

difficult to find a more inspiring place to live and work.

5. What is your special area of Edinburgh, or special place in Edinburgh and why?

The lovely greenways of Edinburgh where people smile as you cycle past. Calm, serene and green – they are very special.

6. If you have a mentor then could you tell us who that is and about your relationship with them?

I don't have a formal mentor, but I have worked for over five years with John Lauder, National Director of Sustrans Scotland and learned a huge amount from him. His commitment, passion and integrity is core to everything he does.

7. Your plan of attack for the next 12 months?

I currently lead the Edinburgh City Centre Transformation Project, a hugely exciting project. The next year will be spent listening, learning, collaborating and working hard to make our collective aspirations a reality.



Daisy Narayanan Deputy Director Sustrans Scotland who is seconded to the City of Edinburgh Council to deliver the City Centre Transformation Project

At the recent SPOKES meeting Daisy was quite frank about the task in hand. She said : “Transformation is a bit word but small things can make a big difference. We have one, three, five and ten year plans. And we have a draft plan as to what the city will look like in 2050.

“Our transformation project must be formed with collaborative action and decisions. I am an architect and a cyclist, but now I am working with a cross-party group made up of conveners of housing, transport, planning and economy. It is not just a transport project but also one of social justice. This is a

city centre for all of us, and there are an amazing 22 projects within the remit.

“Out of our 95,000 commuters two thirds prefer to travel by car so that is one challenge but there are many opportunities for our city transport strategy. We will have a website soon to show what we are doing, and by August 2019 our plan will be adopted.”