

InfraSisters – join the night ride on International Women’s Day

The InfraSisters mass cycle ride will take place on 8 March 2023, leaving Middle Meadow Walk at 7.30pm to celebrate International Women’s Day.

The theme for this year’s International Women’s Day is Embrace Equity. The organisers want to get the world talking about why ‘equal opportunities are no longer enough’.

The difference between equality and equity is important. Equality means each individual or group is given the same resources or opportunities. But equity recognises that people have different circumstances, and resources should be allocated in a way that enables equal outcomes. This is a critical issue when designing public spaces and transport infrastructure. Women and girls should be able to cycle safely and comfortably around Edinburgh at all times of the day and night.

However, the current cycle infrastructure, dominated by isolated off-road shared paths, is not considered safe by many women and girls. These paths lack escape routes, are not overlooked by houses, and there are instances of harassment, anti-social behaviour, and even assault. Women and girls who want to cycle must choose between these paths or hostile roads and junctions that suffer from aggressive unpredictable drivers and poor design. It’s a choice some women and girls

are not prepared to make. Many either don't cycle at all in the city or stop cycling in the dark winter months when the threat of male violence feels simply too great.

In November 2021, a group of women formed the InfraSisters to campaign for night-time cycling infrastructure that's safe for women and girls. They were fed up with being harassed on dangerous roads and feeling threatened on off-road paths. They have since run three mass night-time rides through Edinburgh and their fourth one, Our Streets Our Nights, will be on International Women's Day. While the rides are organised and led by women, everyone is welcome to join in. This March, they are once again calling for an equitable approach to urban design that recognises and addresses the needs and experiences of women and girls, including those who use adapted cycles, trikes etc to get around. Councillors must prioritise safe and comfortable on-road cycle infrastructure, protected from traffic or off the road, on well-lit direct routes. Design compromises, that make cycle routes and infrastructure unwelcoming or unsafe for women and girls, are not equitable.

For more information about the InfraSisters and their International Women's Day ride [click here](#) or follow @InfraSisters on Twitter and Facebook.



Female Cycling Group, Meadows, Edinburgh, 21 Nov 2021 © 2021 J.L. Preece