

BIKE *life*

EDINBURGH
2015



♦ EDINBURGH ♦
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL


sustrans
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On the up - developing bike life in Edinburgh

The number of people using bikes to get around Edinburgh is on the up. And as someone who has just recently got back on a bike, it is great to see more and more people doing the same.

It's no accident that cycling is increasing in Edinburgh. As a city we've committed to investing 5%, 6%, 7% and now 8% of our total Roads and Transport budget in measures aimed at achieving the ambitious cycling targets in our Active Travel Action Plan. We are now on the cusp of further exciting developments. By 2017 nearly 80% of Edinburgh's streets, including many busy inner city routes, will have a 20mph speed limit, helping people feel safer travelling on foot and by bike. In addition, we are starting to implement cross city centre cycle routes protected from traffic. These will make a huge difference, linking up our traffic-free network and enabling people to cycle to many more places simply, easily and more enjoyably.

Bike Life Edinburgh celebrates these changes and underlines the important role cycling can play in making Edinburgh one of the most liveable cities in the UK. More cycling and walking, and less car use, help us move towards a cleaner, healthier, more sustainable Edinburgh; a place where people can thrive. A clear message from Bike Life is that people in Edinburgh want to be able to cycle more and I am looking forward to the challenge of helping to make this possible.

Councillor Lesley Hinds
Convener of the Transport and Environment Committee,
The City of Edinburgh Council



Introducing Bike Life

Sustrans is collaborating with seven cities in the UK – Belfast, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Greater Manchester and Newcastle – to report on progress towards making cycling an attractive and everyday means of travel.

Bike Life is inspired by the Copenhagen Bicycle Account, and is an assessment of cycling development including cycling conditions, new initiatives, and satisfaction with various aspects of cycling.

This is the first of two reports, with the second being published in 2017. The information in this report comes from local data, including a representative survey of over 1,100 residents in Edinburgh. More details on the report findings and methodology can be found at www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife

Our thanks to the people of Edinburgh who took part in the survey and who volunteered to have their photos taken for this report.

KEY FACTS FOR EDINBURGH AT A GLANCE

16.5 million bike trips in Edinburgh in a year

11% increase in trips by bike between 2013 and 2014

32% of people ride a bike once a month or more

8 in 10 people support increasing the safety of cycling, more than any other way of getting around the city

74% of people in Edinburgh want to see more spent on cycling

£12.5 million is the benefit to health in the city, in a single year, from the current level of people riding bikes

6,234 tonnes of CO₂ saved annually by people riding a bike rather than driving – equivalent to the annual emissions of over 2,400 cars

67p per mile is the saving to individuals and to the local economy, for every mile biked instead of driven – which works out at **nearly £14 million** a year for Edinburgh at current levels of cycling

OVERVIEW

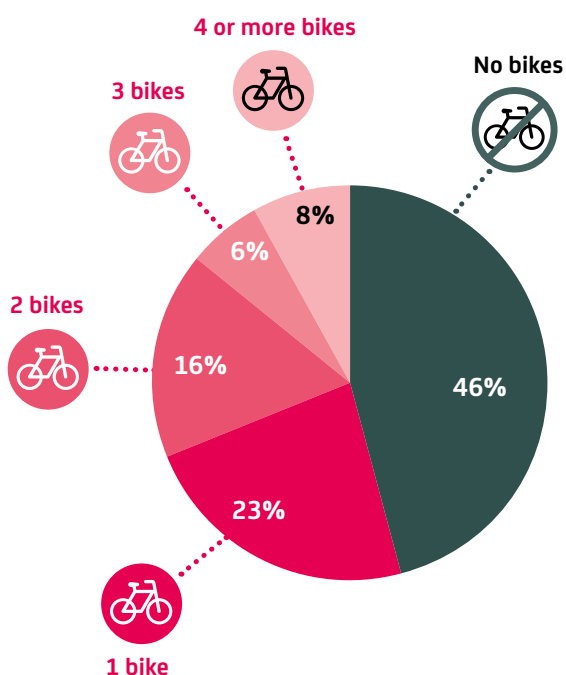
Taking the pulse of
bike life in Edinburgh



BIKE OWNERSHIP IS A BIG PART OF LIFE IN EDINBURGH

Over half (**54%**) of people live in households that own at least one bike*.

HOW MANY ADULT BICYCLES DO YOU OWN IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?



Bike ownership is greatest amongst those aged 45-54 with two thirds (**67%**) having at least one adult bike in their household compared to **40%** amongst 65-74 year olds, and **13%** amongst those aged over 75.

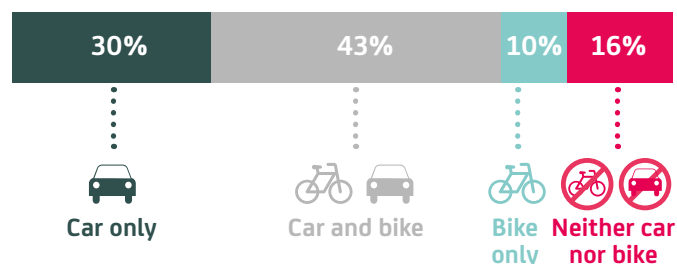
When it comes to children's bikes, a quarter (**25%**) of people live in households with at least one.

There's a big crossover between owning a bike and owning a car – most car owners also own a bike.

In Edinburgh one in six (**16%**) people live in a household with neither a car nor a bike, and **10%** have access to at least one bike but no car.

Having the choice to ride a bike could help many people to get to jobs, services, family and friends.

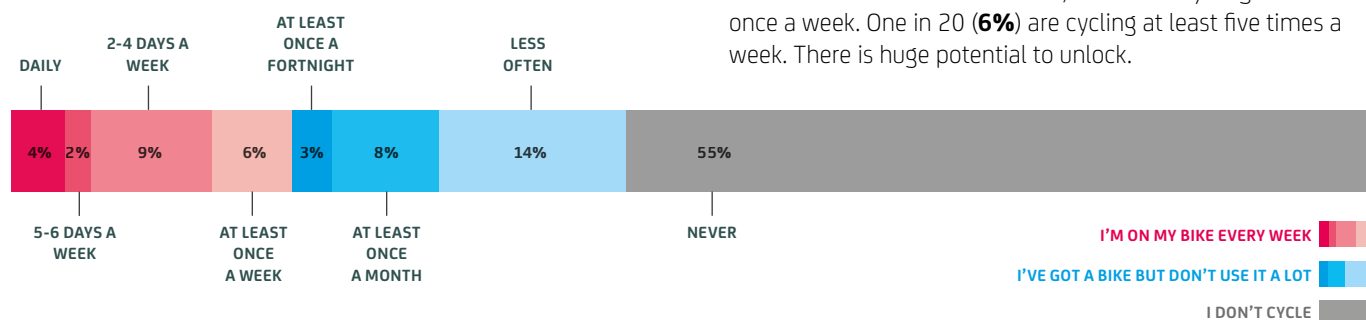
HOW MANY CARS AND VANS ARE OWNED, OR ARE AVAILABLE FOR USE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD?



*Car and bicycle ownership figures refer to percentages of people who live in a household where there is at least one bike. This is different from how census data is usually reported.

HOW OFTEN ARE PEOPLE RIDING A BIKE?

THINKING OF HOW YOU USUALLY TRAVEL AROUND, HOW OFTEN DO YOU CYCLE?



While over half of all people live in households that own a bike, they are not all being used.

About a third (**32%**) of people in Edinburgh say they usually ride a bike at least once a month, with **21%** cycling at least once a week. One in 20 (**6%**) are cycling at least five times a week. There is huge potential to unlock.

PERCEPTIONS OF BIKES ARE OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE

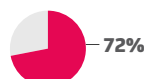
The people of Edinburgh love what bike life can offer them.

They agree that:

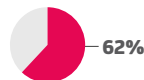
they like to see people out and about on bikes



things would be better if people in general rode bikes more



more people riding bikes would make Edinburgh a better place to live and work



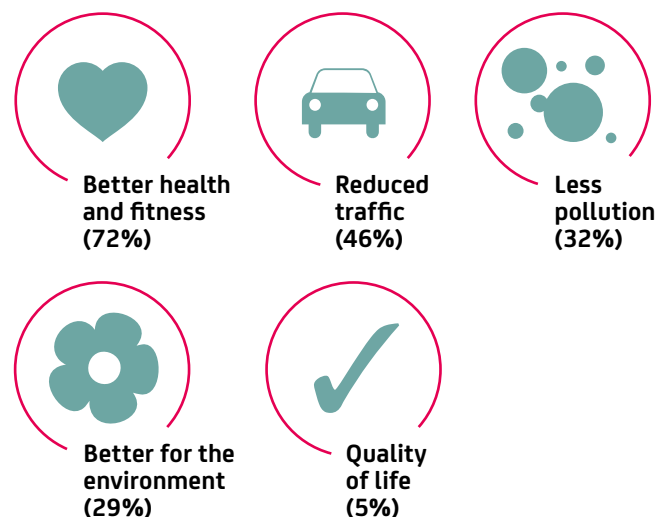
things would be better if friends and family rode bikes more



they feel they should ride a bike more



There are lots of reasons why the people of Edinburgh think more people riding bikes would make the city a better place:



SAFETY IS A CONCERN, AND PEOPLE WANT MORE INVESTED

Whilst half (**52%**) of residents think Edinburgh is a good place to ride a bike overall, a significant proportion have concerns about safety.

only 33%

of people rate cycling safety in Edinburgh as good or very good*

only 24%

of people believe that safety for children riding a bike is good or very good

But it's worth remembering that a serious injury or worse is rare at about **once every 1.1 million miles** pedalled around Edinburgh.

8 in 10

residents (**80%**) want better safety for people riding bikes. Better safety will require more investment.

Across the seven cities involved in Bike Life, the average that people want local and national governments together to be spending on cycling is **£26** per person per year.



*The question was 'Whether you cycle or not, tell me whether you think safety of riding a bike in Edinburgh is good or bad'

**The question was 'Central and local governments in the UK spend around £300 per person on transport every year. Of this about £3 per person is spent on cycling, rising to £10 per person in some cities. How much do you think should be spent on cycling per person in the UK?'

VIEWS

from the saddle



"I love my bike, it's a peaceful, active way to travel and it's also quick and easy. I can actually see things as I go by, and talk to my kids as we cycle through town. We need proper cycle lanes that folk cannot park on or load in, like on George Street."

Lucy Power



"For me there are so many reasons for cycling – environmental, health, a sense of freedom, time saving and the subversive feeling of taking routes that aren't open to cars!"

Simon Allen



"Within about half an hour I can reach anywhere in this fair city, Edinburgh. Cycling truly liberates my life and puts a smile on my face as I engage with my journey and others on it."



Lucy Iredale



"I enjoy being in the fresh air, and like the exercise. Some potholes are fairly dangerous though."

Daniel Jefferson



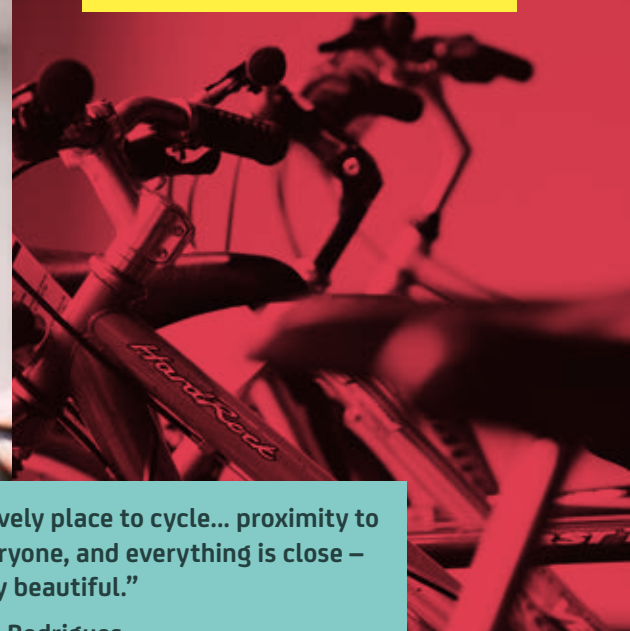
"I would love to ride my bike more but the cars scare me."

Christina Weeks



"Lovely place to cycle... proximity to everyone, and everything is close – very beautiful."

Ash Rodrigues



"I ride a bike in Edinburgh because it is fast, cheap and fun. You see the world differently by bike."

Claire Connachan



IN DEPTH

Facts and figures
for Edinburgh

WHAT'S AVAILABLE AND WHO'S IN THE KNOW?

192 miles
of bike routes

INCLUDING

123 miles
of traffic-free routes

AND

0.5 miles
of protected bike lanes

43% of people
live within
125 metres
of a cycle lane,
track or shared
use path



33%
of Edinburgh's
streets have a
20mph speed limit



Nearly 3,000
public bike
parking spaces

Awareness of bike routes, bike parking
and initiatives to increase levels of
bike use is varied, although regular
bike riders have better knowledge.

HOW MUCH, IF ANYTHING, WOULD YOU SAY
YOU KNOW ABOUT THE FOLLOWING?



All residents – % great or fair
amount of knowledge



Regular bike riders* – % great or
fair amount of knowledge

Cycle routes on or
alongside roads

47

69

Traffic-free routes away from
roads, through parks or along
canals and former railway paths

49

79

Other cycling facilities such
as cycle parking

21

41

Initiatives to increase the
number of people riding a bike

22

34

*Regular bike riders are people who had ridden a bike within four weeks of being surveyed

HOW DO PEOPLE RATE EDINBURGH'S CYCLE ROUTES?

Just over half (**52%**) of people think Edinburgh is a good place to ride a bike overall, and about half rate the following as 'very good' or 'good'. ▶

The **condition**
of cycle routes

53%

The **amount**
of cycle routes

53%

The **signposting**
of cycle routes

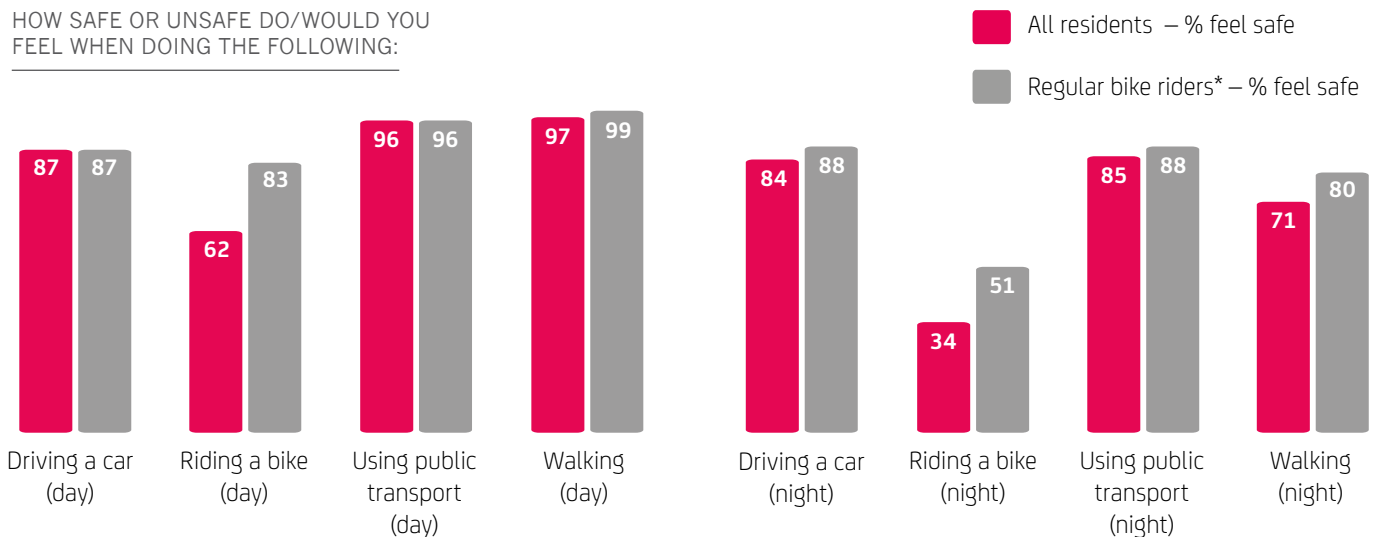
49%

The **directness**
of cycle routes

47%

RIDING A BIKE FEELS LESS SAFE THAN OTHER WAYS OF TRAVELLING

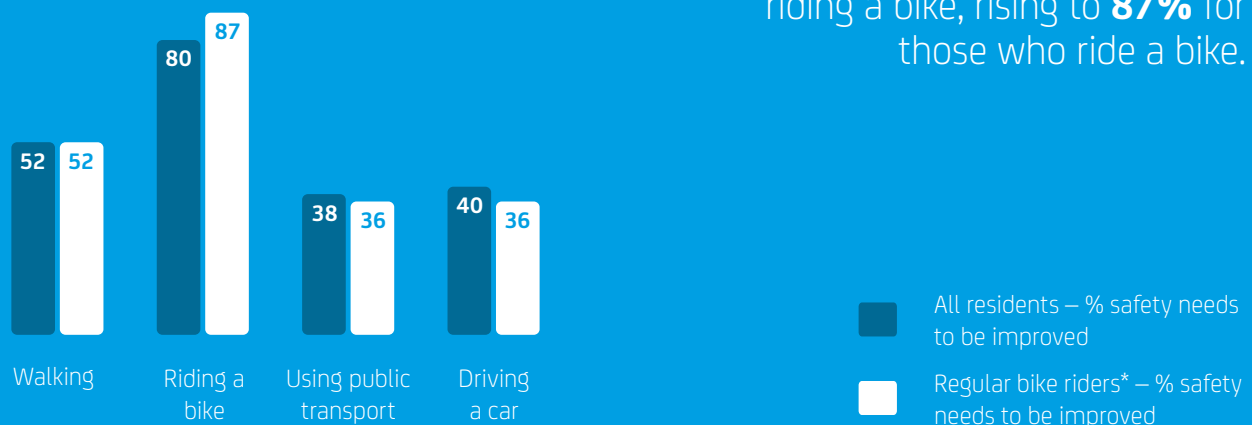
HOW SAFE OR UNSAFE DO/WOULD YOU
FEEL WHEN DOING THE FOLLOWING:



PEOPLE WANT IMPROVED SAFETY FOR CYCLING

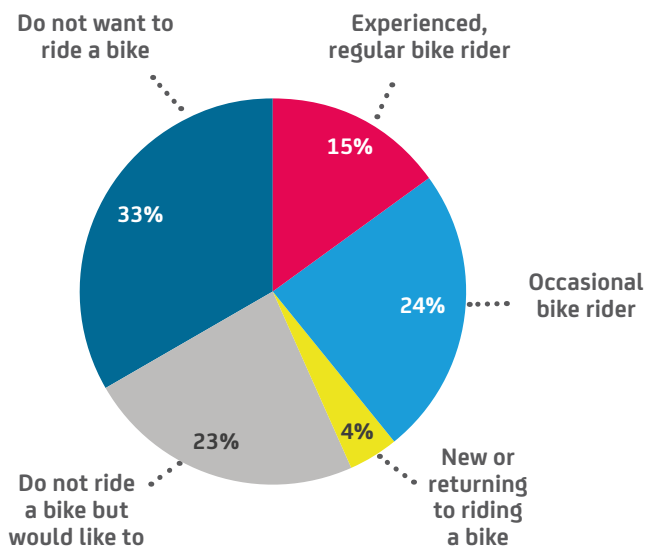
FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING, DO YOU
THINK SAFETY NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED?

Eight in 10 residents (**80%**) support improving the safety of riding a bike, rising to **87%** for those who ride a bike.



HOW DO PEOPLE SEE THEMSELVES WHEN IT COMES TO RIDING A BIKE?

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BEST DESCRIBES YOU?



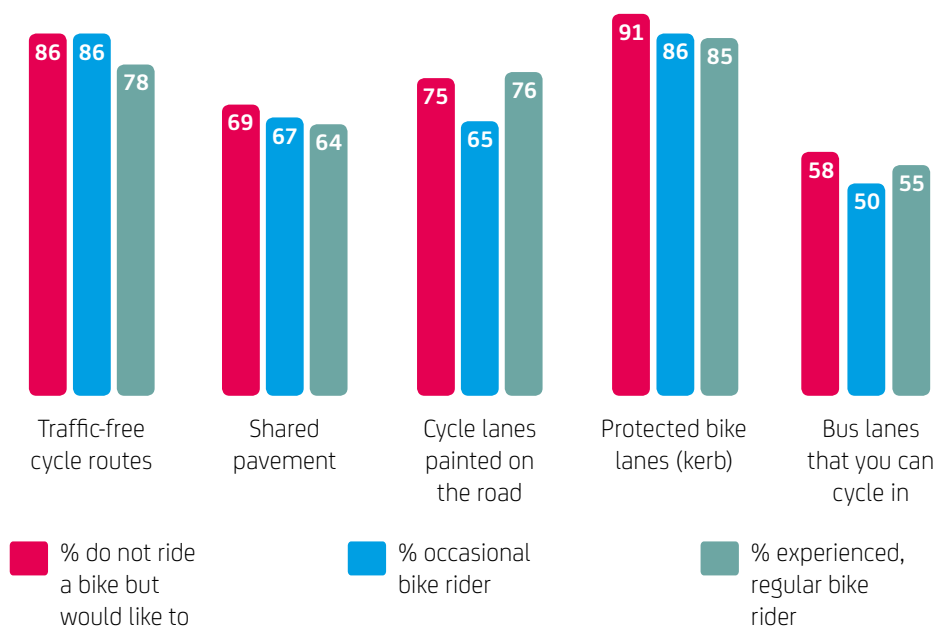
Nearly a quarter (**23%**) of people say that whilst they don't currently ride a bike, they'd like to.

Taking these people together with occasional, new and returning bike riders, the potential for growth is clear.

WHAT KIND OF BIKE ROUTES COULD GET MORE PEOPLE CYCLING?

Protected bike lanes are the kinds of routes most people want to help them start cycling or to cycle more – **91%** of people who do not ride a bike but would like to, and **86%** of occasional bike riders say this.

WOULD ANY OF THE FOLLOWING HELP YOU START CYCLING/CYCLE MORE?



Three quarters (**74%**) of residents would like to see more investment in cycling.



Support is high

across all sections of the population, including people aged **over 75 (57%)**, those least likely to ride a bike.

WHO'S RIDING AND WHERE?

Between 2013 and 2014 the number of trips made by bike in Edinburgh increased by 11%

Nearly 37 million miles are pedalled by people every year

16.5 million trips are made by bike in Edinburgh in a year, which averaged out over the population, means 34 trips per person per year.

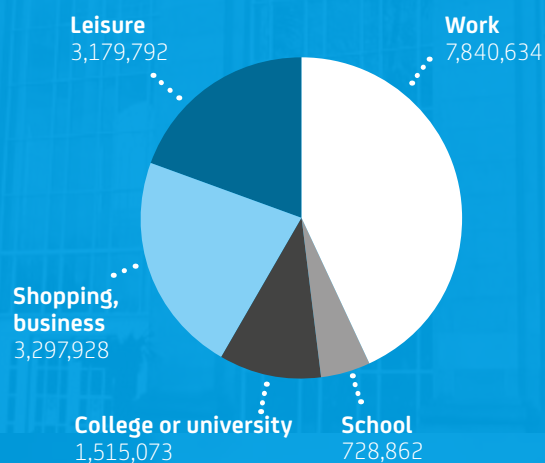
Men are twice as likely to ride bikes – **66%** male compared to **34%** female.



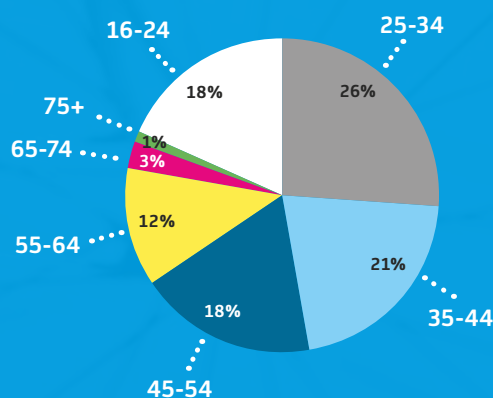
3% of people riding bikes in Edinburgh identify as black or minority ethnic compared to 4% of the population of Edinburgh.



Number of bike trips by purpose



When it comes to the age of people riding bikes in Edinburgh, older people are under-represented



HOW WE'RE DEVELOPING BIKE LIFE IN EDINBURGH



Coming to a street near you...20mph

77% of Edinburgh's streets will soon benefit from 20mph speed limits – a roll out that is supported by more than two thirds of residents. It is expected that this will rise – eight in ten residents who currently live on 20mph streets support them.

A growing cycle network

In 2010 Edinburgh's Active Travel Action Plan gave a high priority to developing a city that is attractive and safe for people on bikes, whatever their age or ability. The city's emerging QuietRoutes cycle network uses low traffic roads, traffic-free paths and will increasingly include protected bike lanes.

More provision for bikes and more people using bikes

Since 2010 the council has been busy upgrading and adding 56 miles of new or improved routes for bikes; constructing new paths, adding better lighting and improving signage. It is planning a further 80 miles of bike routes, committing 8% of its transport budget in 2015/16, up from 5% in 2012/13. This is bringing big benefits to the city, with more people riding bikes and fewer people driving.

Making more roads bike and people friendly

Reducing traffic speeds is crucial to making a bike-friendly city, and the council has recently started to install protected bike lanes on some major roads as part of the QuietRoutes network.



Children and young people cycling to school

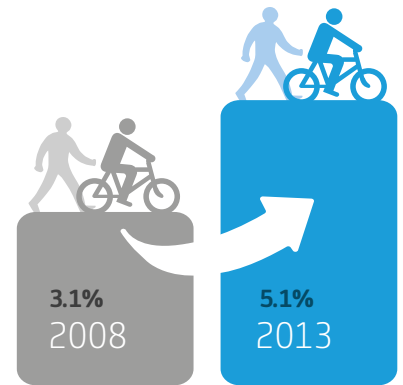
Children want to cycle to school. Giving them the choice to do this, and parents the peace of mind to let them, is key to reducing peak time traffic whilst creating a healthy travel habit for life, not to mention making the school run a lot more fun.

Sustrans has been working with children and schools in Edinburgh since 2009, reaching 9,000 children in 45 schools, giving them the skills, confidence and information they need to ride a bike. Working alongside are the council's Active Schools team who currently reach 71% of primary six school children (10-11 year olds), training them in cycling on roads and paths.

Hand-in-hand with training and skills the council is also implementing measures to make our streets safer for children. The trial school streets project, where roads around selected schools are closed to people driving at drop-off and pick-up times, will create safe zones for children who are biking, walking or scooting to school.

71%

of primary six school children (10-11 year olds) trained with **bikeability** (today's cycle proficiency)



Percentage of children riding a bike to school has increased from **3.1%** (2008) to **5.1%** (2013)

A people-friendly, accessible city centre

George Street survey results



65%

of respondents would like year round pedestrianised areas on George Street

69%

of respondents thought that the trial redesign encouraged people to spend more time in George Street

48%

of people riding bikes said they cycled more on George Street as a result of the trial cycle lane



74%

of respondents thought that the trial redesign of George Street improved the street

Edinburgh is a beautiful, vibrant and hugely popular city. Its centre is easily accessible by public transport and most people arriving there walk, use public transport or cycle. But there are high traffic volumes on many of the main streets and this diminishes the quality of experience of our city for both residents and visitors. Improving access so more people can arrive by bike is an important part of addressing this and reclaiming the city centre for people.

George Street and street design

The trial re-configuration of George Street, where the council gave one side of the street over to walking, with a cycle lane, was resoundingly popular. Though the trial is now over, plans are afoot to build on its successes and implement a permanent solution.

Beyond George Street, the council is changing its whole approach to street design and has just adopted new people-friendly guidance aimed at delivering this change. Over time this will help transform the way all of us experience life in Edinburgh's streets.



BIKE TO THE FUTURE

© Alan Laughlin



Positive perceptions of cycling, and a high level of support for increased investment, mean there's significant potential to bring about change that continues to improve bike life in Edinburgh.

Three quarters of people think positively about riding bikes. What's more there is also a high level of support for increased investment in cycling. This presents a significant potential to bring about further changes that continue to improve conditions for riding bikes in Edinburgh.

Half of residents either want to take up cycling or to cycle more, and the Council aims to help people to do this in the following ways.

In the short term, we'll be working to make everyone more aware of what's already available to make getting about by bike easier. Many people don't know where the best cycle routes are, so we need to let them know.

And we'll be continuing to work hard to meet expectations for more and better cycle facilities. It's clear that people want to be and feel safer when cycling. We need to focus on this if we are to enable more people who would like to ride a bike to have that choice.

In the coming years our plans include:

a 20mph speed limit for nearly 80% of the city's road network, including all residential streets, the entire city centre and all main shopping streets

filling in missing links in our QuietRoutes cycle network, including cross city-centre cycle routes protected from busy traffic

upgrades of existing cycle routes so they are well signed, lit, drained and surfaced
more **protected** bike lanes

city-wide marketing to promote getting about Edinburgh by bike

further expansion of **on-street bike parking**

trial **traffic exclusion zones** around suitable schools at drop off and pick up times

continuing development of our **cycle training programme** (Bikeability) in more Edinburgh schools

engaging more with workplaces to help **encourage people to commute by bike.**

These actions will come at a cost, at a time when Edinburgh City Council is under extreme financial pressure. So the partnership with Sustrans, the Scottish Government and others is likely to be even more vital. For its part the Council is committed to further increasing the percentage of its Roads and Transport budget spent on cycling until it reaches 10% in 2017/18.

This report will be used by us to measure progress towards our Active Travel Action Plan cycling targets for 2020, and to help us prioritise our actions.

	2010/11 estimate	Current estimate	2020 target
Journey to work (Edinburgh residents)	4.8%	7.3%	15%
All trips (Edinburgh residents)	2%	3-4%	10%



**A note on terminology
and methodology:**

We refer to people and residents rather than respondents when reporting findings of the attitudinal surveys.

Due to the rounding up or down of individual figures, the percentages on charts may not total 100% exactly.

Further details are available at www.sustrans.org.uk/bikelife



Sustrans makes smarter travel choices possible, desirable and inevitable. We're a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. We work with families, communities, policy-makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.



Sustrans is a registered charity in the UK No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)

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