



SOUTH WEST HERTS SPOKES CYCLING GROUP

PDF VERSION



Kangaroo Races Past
Buckingham Palace ...on a bike!

continued



Saturday 7th July saw the Prologue of the *Tour de France* coming to the streets of London. This was a 7.9km course starting on Whitehall going through Green Park & Hyde Park and finishing on The Mall. The ‘*Caravane Publicitaire*’ was the first to come by, like a carnival with many floats of strange design

promoting the various sponsors of the event, some throwing freebies to the crowd. A French commentary pervaded the atmosphere. After this the riders set off at 1 minute intervals, with the faster riders towards the end.

David Turner organised a Spokes ride to the event and others met up in the park. Others groups and individuals had the same idea judging by the numbers of bikes at the temporary ‘cycle parks’.

At the ‘People’s Village’ in Hyde Park various stalls provided a French style lunch (bread, cheese & wine etc) which we ate while watching the time trial



on a big screen. Afterwards we perused cycling related stalls and then saw the riders flash past us in riots of colour with the Serpentine as a backdrop.

The number of people watching this event, as well as the First Stage to Canterbury the following day, exceeded all expectations, partly due to a sunny weekend. We can only hope that this event will encourage more people to get on their bikes in London and the UK generally. Despite the later revelations of drug scandals as in previous years, the Tour remained a spectacle and an inspiration throughout the 22 days and 3,554km.

Keep that dog
under control!

Veronica & Iain

Sarratt to Santa Coloma Sponsored Ride

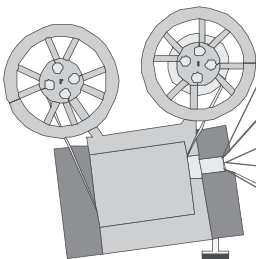
Spokes member Tom Eden, of Sarratt, is hoping Spokes cyclists might like to sponsor him for a marathon cycle ride he is undertaking to raise money for the Watford Peace Hospice. The aim is to raise £10,000 to sponsor a year's cost of running a room in the inpatient unit.

Tom, 66, is planning to cycle 1,000 miles from Sarratt to Santa Coloma, near Barcelona, starting on September 7th. He will have a support driver, Ann Dorrett, also from Sarratt. He reckons the trip will take around 25 days hard riding, including a few rest days.

You can sponsor Tom by visiting www.justgiving.com/tomeden. You can pay by debit or credit card and the money will go direct to the Peace Hospice. If you are a UK taxpayer, the hospice will automatically benefit from 28% extra in Gift Aid.

London Cycling Guides

The 19 London Cycling Guides have now been substantially revised and replaced by 14 new maps which allow each map to cover twice as much territory. The central London map that occupied the reverse side of each old map has been replaced by an enlarged map to dedicated central London. To obtain the **FREE** maps, ring Transport for London 0207 222 1234, or visit the TfL website: www.tfl.gov.uk - cycling is in the Road Users section.



BICYCLE FILM FESTIVAL

The dates for the London festival are
16th to 20th October.

Various bicycle related films will be shown.

For more information see their web-site:

http://bicyclefilmfestival.com/2007_site/london

Highway Code: no gain

CCN has told the Department for Transport (DfT) that its proposed amendments to rules 61 and 63 of the new Highway Code do not address the main causes of complaint: that there is no evidence that cycle facilities and cycle lanes generally improve cycling safety and that there should not be a presumption that cyclists should use them. The rules are also very badly worded and contradictory.

The main change made by the DfT has been to explicitly state that facilities are not mandatory. Although this might provide some clarity to the layman, in legal terms it has never been an issue. Cases of contributory negligence with regard to facilities and helmets are not based on legal requirements, but on what a prudent cyclist might be expected to do. The Highway Code is accepted as a statement of prudent behaviour. The default position of rule 61 remains that it is to be expected that cyclists will normally use cycle facilities. It will be up to them, if challenged, to show that the circumstances at the particular time and place justified doing otherwise, and in particular that *at the time* it was unsafe to use them. The rules do not provide for ignoring facilities because it might *become* unsafe to do so (such as avoiding a cycle lane at a side road because this increases the risk of conflict if a vehicle emerges).

The rules are so badly worded that they will provide a feast for lawyers, but it is unlikely that there will be any practical benefit to cyclists compared with the DfT's original rules that so many cyclists found unacceptable. Worse, in many ways, is that the rules continue to promote bad practice and assume that less skilled cyclists will be better able to handle the problems inherent in many facilities than more skilled riders. This could mislead some people to ride in places where they might be less, rather than more, safe.

In the view of CCN, cyclists must be free to use their own judgement to decide how best to maximise their safety in the prevailing circumstances. The role of the Highway Code is to inform, not to restrict, those judgements.

In response to the latest consultation, the DfT has made further cosmetic changes, but to no practical effect. However, the DfT has announced that it

is to commission new research into cycling safety including the use of cycle facilities.

The new rules

61 Cycle Routes and Other Facilities. Use cycle routes, advanced stop lines, cycle boxes and toucan crossings unless at the time it is unsafe to do so. Use of these facilities is not compulsory and will depend on your experience and skills, but they can make your journey safer.

63 Cycle Lanes. These are marked by a white line (which may be broken) along the carriageway (see Rule 140). When using a cycle lane, keep within the lane when practicable. When leaving a cycle lane check before pulling out that it is safe to do so and signal your intention clearly to other road users. Use of cycle lanes is not compulsory and will depend on your experience and skills, but they can make your journey safer.



Marketing Boosts Cycling in Demonstration Towns

Transport minister Gillian Merron has announced that there have been big percentage increases in cycling, walking and use of public transport in the Sustainable Travel Towns project, together with falls in car trips of around 12%.

In the three demonstration towns of Darlington, Peterborough and Worcester, cycling trips have increased by 79%, 25% and 36% respectively. Walking has gone up by 29%, 21% and 17%, and public transport use by 14%, 13% and 22%.

All the towns use individualised travel marketing as the main strategy to persuade people to make smarter travel choices. Initial targets were to reduce car traffic by between 7.5% and 10% over 5 years, with many of the journeys transferring to walking or cycling. The programme runs from 2004 to 2009.

High Ambitions and Changing Attitudes in Europe

On the third day of Velo City in Munich in June, the morning plenary was devoted to presentations by five European metropolises: Copenhagen, London, Paris, Munich and Brussels. It was the climax of the conference with the announcement of upbeat and very positive strategies in each case, with each city vying to become the world leader in cycling.

Copenhagen wants 50% more journeys by bike and 20% less CO₂ by 2015. It already has 36% of journeys by bike. The Mayor of Copenhagen was very clear about the benefits of cycling and the need to treat cyclists more positively.

London has seen 83% growth in cycling in 6 years and has plans for 400% growth by 2025 (ref 2000).

In Paris there is a target to reduce car use by 15% in 6 years. 400km of cycle lanes will be in place by the end of 2007.

Cycling is popular in Munich but at present accounts for only 10% of trips. This is to be increased at the expense of car use (39%) without impacting significantly on walking and public transport.

Brussels has seen cycling double (to 4% of trips) in 2 years, with a programme to considerably increase on this before the city hosts the next Velo City in 2009. Cycle parking is a priority.



This year's **Cycle 2007** exhibition will be held at Earl's Court 1.

Friday 12th - Sunday 14th October.

Web-site: www.cycleshow.co.uk

Adult prices: £10.50 advance booking (or £13.50)

Children (aged 13-16): £7.00 (£8.50)

Children (under 12 when accompanied by an adult): £1.00

This event has proved to be an interesting & informative day out in previous years.

SPOKES RIDES & EVENTS

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2007

Remember to bring **lights** and **reflective clothing** as appropriate.

Disclaimer: Participants of rides must be over 16 unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Insurance is your responsibility.

Spokes cannot accept liability for you or your possessions.

It is your responsibility to follow advice and the **Highway Code** at all times.
Your participation is the acceptance of these terms.

N.B. NEW POLICY ON START TIME OF RIDES.
RIDES WILL START AT THE STATED TIME
AND NOT 10-15 MINUTES AFTER.

SO MAKE SURE YOU ARRIVE IN PLENTY OF TIME !

Saturday 1st September 2.00pm Blackwells Café

Meet at the shops at Langley Way/Cassiobury Drive for a 16 mile medium paced ride to Blackwells Café opposite Chipperfield Common. A few short hills. Will include off-road tracks and canal towpath (*alternative route if bad weather*). Contact Diane S.

Sunday 2nd September 10.00am Ridge

Meet at Watford High Street Station. Ridge is the highest point in SW Herts but worth the effort getting there! The ride goes through Radlett and Shenley and returns via Moor Mill and Crabb Lane. About 27 miles. Contact Alan B.

Saturday 8th September 10.20am Historic Churches

Meet at the entrance of Top Golf, Bushey Mill Lane for a ride of 30 miles via Letchmore Heath, Radlett, Shenley and the Colneys. Lunch stop. This will be a *fast-paced* ride as we wish to visit as many as possible of the 12 churches on the route. Mostly on road with some hills.

Participants are requested to either make a donation or to get sponsored in aid of the **Historic Churches Trust**. Contact Veronica or Iain for more information & sponsor forms.



continued



Wednesday 12th September 7.00pm

Evening Ride

Meet at Watford Junction Station for a 10 mile ride to Hemel and surrounding lanes with a pub stop.

Details David T.

Saturday 15th September 10.00am

Mill Green

Meet at Watford High Street Station to cycle through Bricket Wood and St Albans to Mill Green via the Alban Way. About 36 miles.

Fairly flat but riding at a good pace. Pub lunch.

Contact Dennis F.

Wednesday 19th September 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening

Meet in the bar at the Essex Arms, Langley Way at 8pm for a relaxing drink. The menu is varied and good value if you wish to eat. Plenty of space to park bicycles and to sit in the garden, weather permitting. Contact Alison W.

Sunday 23rd September 10.00am Hovis London Freewheel

Meet at Watford Junction Station for train to Euston and then cycle on quiet streets to London Bridge and the start of the Freewheel event, where roads along the river to Green Park will be closed to all traffic except cyclists. Cycle to Green Park, site of the Freewheel Festival with the Cycling Circus, stalls, secure bike park and more. Return to Euston approximately 3.00pm. About 12 miles total. Contact Mary Ann H. *See article over the page...*

Sunday 7th October 10.00am

Great North Way

Meet at Watford High Street Station for a ride along the Great North Way to Hatfield via Radlett, South Mimms and Welham Green, returning along the Alban Way, A414 cycle path, Park Street and How Wood. Lunch stop after Hatfield. A few hills. About 35 miles. Contact Alan B.

Saturday 13th October 10.00am

Chiswell Green

Meet at Watford High Street Station for a ride through Bricket Wood and Verulamium to Gorhambury, returning via Bedmond. Hilly ride at a good pace. About 25 miles. Contact Dennis F.

Note: RIDES WILL START AT THE STATED TIME

Thursday 18th October 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening

Meet in the Moon Under Water pub - High Street, Watford - for a drink, Curry Club or other meal, and chat. We are normally in the dining area at the rear. Contact Diana I.

Saturday 20th October 10.30am Metroland

Meet at Bushey Station for a largely off-road trip through Metroland along neglected byways and quiet roads. Approximately 25 miles. Details David T.

Saturday 27th October 10.30am Coleman Green

Meet at Watford High Street Station. Enjoy the autumn colours whilst cycling along minor roads & tracks to Coleman Green for a pub lunch. Around 35 miles. Back to Watford about 4.00pm. Contact Roger B.

Saturday 27th October 7.45pm Barn Dance

Dance to Fiddlin' Around & caller Lynne Render at Verulam School, Brampton Road, St Albans, AL1 4PR. Tickets about £8.00. Contact Veronica B by **18th October** if you would like tickets or further information.

Saturday 3rd November 10.00am Elstree

Meet at Watford High Street Station and ride to Bushey Heath & on to Elstree Aerodrome. Stop for a tea or coffee and return via Aldenham. About 16 miles. Contact Alan B.



Tuesday 6th November 7.30pm Committee Meeting

Contact Roger for more information.

Saturday 10th November 10.30am Radlett

Meet at Bushey Station for 11 miles to Radlett via Aldenham and Elstree Aerodrome to finish at Toby Carvery for lunch leaving an afternoon for shopping. Details David T.

Saturday 17th November 10.00am Hockeridge Bottom

Meet at Watford Metropolitan Station for a hard, hilly 22 mile ride along some of the best lanes around here. Possible pub stop. Contact Dennis F.

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Saturday 17th November 7.30pm

Crazy Casserole

Warm up with a bowl of homemade comfort food. Several different casserole dishes on offer (*including vegetarian*). Please bring your preferred drink and a contribution of **£3.00**. Please let Iain know by **Wednesday 14th November** if you are coming.



Saturday 24th November 10.45am

The Ayots & Shaw's Corner

Meet at St Albans Abbey Station at 10.45 to meet arrival of 10.25 train from Watford. This is a ride along minor lanes and some stretches of National Cycle Routes starting off along the Smallford Trail then branching off to take in the Ayots and Wheathampstead. We return to St Albans where there is the choice of a train back to Watford or of riding via Bricket Wood along familiar paths. Not particularly hilly. The distance is about 18 miles from the Abbey station, and 6 miles extra each way if the train is not taken. Contact Phil G.

Thursday 29th November 8.00pm Spokes Social Evening

Meet in the Moon Under Water pub - High Street, Watford - for a drink, Curry Club or other meal, and chat. We are normally in the dining area at the rear. Contact Diana I.

Looking Ahead

Saturday 1st December 1.30pm Short and Mysterious!

No, not me, but the ride! Meet at the shops corner of Cassiobury Drive and Langley Way for a short, easy ride for beginners.

Back before dark but bring lights just in case.

Contact Diane S.

Cycle Hero Link

Did you see the CTC advert at the cinema in July?

If not do visit this link : www.cyclehero.com



The Hovis London Freewheel will take place on **SUNDAY 23 SEPT 2007** with the 9 mile motor traffic-free London route open 11am-4pm. It will be signposted and marshalled. For further information see the Freewheel website www.londonfreewheel.com - where you can register to receive email updates and a welcome pack.



There will be six 'Freewheel Hubs' – Gladstone Park in Brent, Finsbury Park, Victoria Park in Tower Hamlets, Peckham Rye, Clapham Common and Ravenscourt Park – where riders can gather to be led by experienced cyclists onto the vehicle-free route. The hubs will also offer bike checks and general cycling advice. It is anticipated that LCC will be working with its local groups on guided rides to the hubs.

Many riders, from mums on shoppers to old folks on rusty relics, will be coming from far and wide to ride down the city's most famous roads, seeing sights like London Eye, Big Ben, Buckingham Palace and Tower Bridge. Some may wish to use Freewheel as an opportunity to raise money for charity or as a company team-building day out.

Mary Ann is leading a Spokes ride to this event - see 23rd September...

Rail report praises UK

A report for the European Cyclists Federation (ECF) about cycle carriage on long-distance trains finds that British train companies have the best policies. GNER took a commanding lead in first place in the ratings and Hull Trains, Midland Mainline and Virgin were in positions 3, 4 and 5. Second place went to Swiss Railways. Eurostar, however, scored badly, coming 29th out of the 32 companies.

Ratings reflected policies for the carriage of cycles, arrangements for booking tickets for bikes and on-line information about cycle carriage. The four UK companies achieved the maximum score for cycle carriage, as they allow bikes to be taken free on all their services. No other operator has such a policy.

Arrangements for booking tickets are a little better in Switzerland than for GNER, while the best website is that of Deutsche Bahn. The ECF report is something of a mixed blessing from a UK point of view. While our train companies may be better than their European counterparts, the facilities for taking bikes on trains are much poorer than they were even 5 years ago, let alone in the 1980s when most long-distance trains could carry 20 bikes or more. The Association of Train Operating Companies quickly heard of the report and expressed their delight!



Car-Free in your Street

This year the theme for In Town Without My Car! (22nd September, part of European Mobility Week) is Streets for People! As well as encouraging local authorities to participate, people with concerns about traffic are urged to lobby their local councils for a car free day *in their own streets*.

A draft letter, bid form and press release can be downloaded from <http://www.itwmc.gov.uk>. The idea is that councils invite bids from residents. But, of course, residents do not have to wait to be invited! Groups can simply fill out the bid form and send it off to their councils, perhaps with a copy to the local paper.

For further information, contact organiser Richard Evans,
richard.m.evans@ntlworld.com.

Quarterly Quotations

"The cheapest form of addiction"

from A to B magazine

"Cycle tracks will abound in Utopia"

H.G. Wells

"It's the only sporting event in the world where you need a haircut halfway through"

Chris Boardman on
the Tour de France

20,000 Vélib Bikes For Paris

As part of his policy to reduce motorised traffic in Paris by 40% before 2020, mayor Bertrand Delanoë is to make available more than 20,000 bikes on the city's streets by the end of 2007.

The first 10,000 went into service on 15th July, based in more than 1,400 bike 'stations'. That's one every 300 yards! Available for use by residents and visitors alike, the bikes with baskets and mudguards will be nominally free to use for the first half hour, then from €1 to €8 for periods up to 3.5 hours. Registration fees to use the bikes will cost €29 per year, €5 per week or €1 per day.

The scheme follows the success of similar projects in Lyon and Bordeaux. Monsieur Delanoë wants to increase cycle use in Paris from the present 40,000 journeys a day to 250,000 by the end of the year. He said that the bicycles would give Parisians a new sense of "pleasure, freedom, innovation and performance".

The new administration of President Sarkozy has been setting an example. Two ministers swapped their limousines for bicycles in Paris for a week. One of these was Alain Juppé, the deputy Prime Minister, who heads a new Environment and Transport superministry. However, cyclists have complained that, at 20kg, the new bikes are too heavy.

THE 2007 TOUR OF BRITAIN IS ANNOUNCED

9TH -15TH SEPTEMBER

The route, dates and host locations of the 2007 Tour of Britain cycle race have been announced and there's plenty of new information online. Have a look at the website

www.tourofbritain.co.uk to see

where the race is going and which towns and cities are involved.

This year it is visiting lots of new areas and going from South to North for the first time.

Of the 13 venues who are hosting a stage of the race, nine are new to the event and none of the stage finish venues have ever hosted a stage finish before. The race takes in two weekends for the very first time. The 2007 Tour of Britain is going to be more exciting than ever!

The Route

Stage 6
Dumfries to Glasgow

Stage 5
Liverpool to Kendal

Stage 4
Rotherham to Bradford

Stage 3
Worcester to Wolverhampton

Stage 2
Yeovilton to Taunton

Stage 1
Reading to Southampton

Prologue Time Trial
Crystal Palace, London



SPOKES DISCOUNTS

Show your **SPOKES** membership card and get **10%** off repairs and spares at:

CyclePedia 01923 221901
70-78 Merton Road, Watford

Cycles UK 01923 243707
484 St Albans Road, Watford

Neale & Sons 01923 223916
26 Vicarage Road Precinct, Watford

Thirteens Cycles 01923 234221
73 Chalk Hill, Oxhey, Watford

How To Help

How did you find out about Spokes?

Why do you cycle?

Can you help with any of the following?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organising cycle rides | <input type="checkbox"/> Planning cycle schemes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surveying of routes | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cartography / CAD mapping | <input type="checkbox"/> Social events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter articles / artwork | <input type="checkbox"/> Dealing with local councils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Merchandise / advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> Letter writing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
-



How To Join

SPOKES membership is only **£8.00** per person per year, and just **£1.00** for each additional family member at the same address (*plus any donation you can afford*). For this amount you receive regular mailings on activities and actions and the satisfaction of helping us campaign for improved cycling conditions in the South West Herts area. We organise regular events and rides too. To join, complete form (*see other side too*) and send with cheque to:

Dara Godivala

6 Highland Road, Northwood Hills, Middlesex, HA6 1JT



Name(s)

Address

.....

Post Code Telephone

Amount £ Donation £ Cheques payable to **SPOKES** please.

E-mail Address :

