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and Cyclenation www.cyclenation.org.uk



SOUTH WEST HERTS SPOKES CYCLING GROUP

Web version



**Friendly
Dinosaur in
Milton Keynes**

For more information: www.spokesgroup.com

AUTUMN: SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2010 ISSUE # 66

Ride of the Month MK4U

by David

3rd July 2010

The joint forces of Watford Spokes and Harrow Cyclists were treated to a great day exploring some of the 170 miles of Milton Keynes cycleways



known as Redways and the countryside around. With lovely sunshine and little wind, the groups converged at Watford Junction and took the train to MK. Exiting from the station we found some large

dog kennels which turned out to be the bike racks for the station as visible in the picture. A quick right turn and we were over the train lines and the A5 on Redways past the Tear Drop Lakes and onto route 51. Though the Redways have suffered from tree root subsidence, they were very quiet and easy to negotiate and with so many of them we met few cyclists along the way, maybe this was related to the local golden dinosaur population which we tamed along the way. We did meet a lot of boats as we passed one of the marinas on the Grand Union canal. As mid morning arrived so the Hilton Hotel jumped out at us and provided a great coffee stop.

We headed out to the east of the town passing the Open University and crossing the M1 made our way along country lanes to Cranfield University for lunch at the Cafe Pacific venue, a view of the local airfield just over the fence and a look at the experimental glasshouse with some lovely strawberries growing inside. We were advised of young deer in a field not far away worth a visit but they had just been moved - oh, dear. We declined to take a slight detour which would have allowed a view of the University's sewage works.



Leaving the University, we cycled west along more country lanes and back through the housing estates each one of which seemed to have its own set of Redways. These largely follow the pattern of the H, V, N and S roads of Milton Keynes and provided a pleasant alternative to cycling on the roads. On one brief stop to consult the map we were rewarded with the **Red Arrows** flying directly overhead!

It wasn't long before we were back at the station and returning to Watford and Harrow saying we must come back again and cover some of the remaining 160 miles untouched. Does anyone else want to join us? Milton Keynes may seem a long way away, but the fastest trains take only 23 minutes to get there. Also, you only need a group of three people these days to get a GroupSave reduction on the ticket price.



Boris' Bicycles

22nd August 2010

Spokes cyclists trying out the Barclays' London Cycle Hire Scheme bicycles and taking in the capital's sights.

Visit

<http://oobrien.com/vis/bikes/>
to see which docking stations
are empty, full *(or in between)*.

Opening with 5000 cycles, to eventually grow to 6000, the bikes look very stylish and have full mudguards, enclosed chains, fitted lights and a front carrier. There will be 400 'docking stations' when the scheme is fully operational and the bikes will have NO LOCKS so MUST be returned to a 'dock' after use.

No rider should ever be more than 300 metres from a 'dock'. **cyclenation**



New Type of Electric Bike?

A device that enables almost any bicycle to be transformed into an e-bike within minutes has reached the final of the James Dyson design awards.

Developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), the Copenhagen wheel is so named because it is intended to help the city achieve its goal of becoming the world's first carbon-neutral capital by 2025.

As well as an electric motor and batteries, the wheel houses a 3-speed internal hub gear, a torque sensor, a GPS unit and a sensor kit that monitors noise, pollution, relative humidity and temperature. For more information see:

www.eta.co.uk/2010/08/12/copenhagen-electric-bike-wheel-reaches-design-competition-final

"Dear Spokes,

Many thanks to Linden and members for the lovely good-bye barbecue and also for the M&S vouchers and the marvellous prints of the old adverts for Sturmeys Archer Ladies' bikes. See you in Derbyshire!
Mary Ann"

"An American Republican candidate in the November elections seems to be living on a different planet. Dan Maes, who is a candidate for governor of Colorado, has attacked a proposal to provide bike hire (like London's new scheme) in Denver. Why? Because it is the brainchild of the United Nations International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, and, he says, "the United Nations has a strategy to rein in American cities".

SPOKES RIDES & EVENTS

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2010

Remember to bring: **water, spare inner tube, lights & reflective/waterproof 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.

Note: All telephone numbers without codes are Watford (**01923**).

Please make sure you arrive in plenty of time at the start so rides can leave at the stated time

Saturday 4 September 10.00

South of Watford Circular

Pump House, Local Board Road Ebury Way, Moor Park, Bushey.

Lunch at Aldenham Country Park. Return via Colne Valley. Some hills and off road. 20 miles Medium John

Sunday 5 September 09.15

London SkyRide

Harrow & Wealdstone Station London Sky Ride event 4th year – join the Harrow Cyclists feeder ride to Central London on quieter roads and meeting up with other cycle groups along the way. A 15 km route on London roads for cyclists only will be available in central London.



www.goskyride.com/location/london

Tuesday 7 September 10.30

The Tuesday 2 Hour Ride

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Regular short rides on the first Tuesday of each month. 15 miles Medium Roger



Thursday 9 September 10.00

Ley Hill and Whelpley Hill

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges A hilly ride through the best lanes in south-west Herts. 22 miles Medium Dennis



Saturday 11 September 10.00

Sarratt

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Easy ride on local roads with some hills to Chenies and Sarratt returning via Rousebarn Lane. 12 miles Slow Vincent

Sunday 12 September 11.00

London Colney

Garston Medical Centre, near Sainsburys Fairly flat circular ride to London Colney, some off road, stop for lunch at pub or bring sandwiches. 15 miles Medium Vince

Saturday 18 Sept

10.30

Tour of Britain – London Stage 8

Watford Metropolitan Station Train into London for easy London ride prior to spectating at Stage 8 of the Tour of London – This final stage will see the riders take on a brand new race circuit in the London borough of Newham the host borough for the London Olympic and Para-Olympic games 2012. Details on www.tourofbritain.co.uk/ns_race or contact David

Sunday 19 September

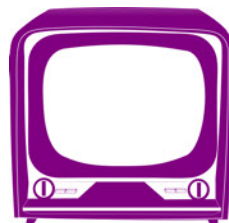
Open House London

Architectural visits by bicycle or public transport to places in London not normally open to the public. www.londonopenhouse.org
For more details contact David

Sunday 19 September 12.25

Mill Green Museum

Choice of 12.07 train from **Watford Junction** or meet **St Albans Abbey Station** for easy ride along Smallford trail to the mill museum to see a collection of vintage Murphy wireless & TV sets. Lunch at nearby pub.
Cycle home or train back as desired (*basic fare £4.20 return*). 22 miles or 12 if returning on train. Slow Phil



Thursday 23 September 20.00

Spokes Social Evening

Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a drink and a curry. Diana

Saturday 25 September 11.00 –15.00

Spokes Publicity Event

Watford Town Centre – volunteers required.
Please contact David

Saturday 2 October 10.00 Chiltern Lanes

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Through the lanes to Cholesbury.
Some hills. Pub lunch. 30 miles Medium John

Sunday 3 October Festival of Cycling

Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire Family ride, 60 or 100km sportive,
20km time trial and the Brompton World Championship are all part of
Breast Cancer Care's Festival of Cycling in the beautiful oak-lined roads
of Blenheim Palace's beautiful park near Oxford. More details via:

www.bikeblenheimpalace.com

Tuesday 5 October 10.30 The Tuesday 2 Hour Ride

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Regular short rides on the first
Tuesday of each month. 15 miles Medium Roger



Saturday 9 October 14.00 Sanuk

Kings Langley Station Ride with some hills (*up and down!*) to the
atmospheric tea shop at Little Heath. 12 miles Medium Diane

Sunday 10 October 10.30 A Trail of Two Hospitals

Garston Medical Centre A ride, which is mostly off-road (*either
bridleways or cycle paths*), with some lanes and a couple of small hills.
Passing through the sites of 2 former hospitals - Napsbury & Harperbury.
Lunch stop in Bricket Wood. 20 miles Medium Iain

13-17 October

Bicycle Film Festival

Barbican Centre, London Film screenings,
parties and rides to celebrate the humble two
wheeler. Further details on:

www.bicyclefilmfestival.com/london



Thursday 14 October 10.00 Sleafshyde

Watford High Street Station Cycle through Bricket Wood & St Albans
to 'The Plough' via the Alban Way. Fairly flat. Pub lunch.
28 miles Medium Dennis

Thursday 14 October 20.00 Spokes Social Evening

Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the
dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a
drink and a curry. Diana



Saturday 16 October 10.00

Bovingdon

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Meander round my favourite lanes and stop for a pint at the Boot if we can get there after noon.

20 miles Medium Dennis

Saturday 23 October 11.00

Cyclists Meet

Watford High Street Station Ride to meet with other cycling groups at the Paper Mill, Apsley for lunch. Outward on lanes via Belsize & Feldon, return along canal path. 17 miles Medium Roger



Sunday 24 October 14.00

Family Ride

St. Johns School, Berry Lane, Mill End, WD3 7HG Family ride using quiet roads and off road sections like the Ebury Way to encourage younger cyclists and their families. Local publicity will ensure the attendance of non-members so a good Spokes turnout will be appreciated. Aquadrome tea stop. 8 miles Slow
Contact rides co-ordinator for latest information.

Tuesday 2 November 10.30

The Tuesday 2 Hour Ride



Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Regular short rides on the first Tuesday of each month. 15 miles Medium Roger

Saturday 6 November 10.30

Elstree Airfield & Radlett

Bushey Station Gentle ride with HAWOG cyclists through Bushey to Aldenham Country Park, break at refurbished Aerodrome Café and on to Radlett prior to Toby Carvery lunch. 12 miles Slow David

Thursday 11 November 10.00

Black Jack's Mill

Pump House, Local Board Road, Watford Ride along the Ebury Way & Colne Valley trail. 20 miles Medium Dennis

Thursday 11 November 20.00

Spokes Social Evening

Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a drink and a curry. Diana

Saturday 13 November 10.00

Chiltern Lanes

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Through the lanes to Felden. Some hills.
Pub lunch. 20 miles Medium John

Saturday 20 November 10.00

Burnham Beeches

Harvester Pub, Two Bridges Through Black Park & Burnham Beaches to Hedgerley for a pub lunch. Finish at the Aquadrome café. Mainly on lanes, a few tracks. 30 miles Medium Roger

Sunday 28 November 11.00

Mystery Ride



Watford Metropolitan Station Mystery Ride to a special location. 15 - 20 miles Medium David

Looking Forwards to the Winter Programme

Thursday 9 December 20.00

Spokes Social Evening

Moon under Water, High Street, Watford Normal location is in the dining area at the rear. Chance for a meet up with fellow members for a drink and a curry. Diana

On-line Cycle Route Planner

At the end of July Transport Direct extended its on-line Cycle Route Planner to include the West Midlands. Typing a 'from' address or post code then a 'to' destination produces a text listing of roads plus a map with the route indicated. The cyclist is given the choice of being given the quietest, or the quickest, or the 'most recreational' route for their journey. In his email to cyclists in Birmingham, the city's Cycling Officer points out: "I'm sure it's likely that the planner will not quite provide the exact route you might have chosen yourself however can I ask that your feedback focuses on the general function of the planner rather than the detail of specific routing."

The web site also lists Teesside and Tyne and Wear as newly included areas.

www.transportdirect.info

cyclenation

The **Deadline** for the Winter Newsletter
is **Sunday 14th November 2010**

How To Help

How did you find out about Spokes?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal recommendation | <input type="checkbox"/> Web-site |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On a cycle ride | <input type="checkbox"/> Library |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CyclePedia | <input type="checkbox"/> Cycles UK |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neale & Sons | <input type="checkbox"/> The Bike Stall (Watford Market) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Northwood Cycle Depot | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Fair |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

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 | <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 | |



Quarterly Quotation

When I go biking, I repeat a mantra of the day's sensations: bright sun, blue sky, warm breeze, blue jay's call, ice melting and so on. This helps me transcend the traffic, ignore the clamourings of work, leave all the mind theatres behind and focus on nature instead. I still must abide by the rules of the road, of biking, of gravity. But I am mentally far away from civilization. The world is breaking someone else's heart." Diane Ackerman

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 :



SPOKES DISCOUNTS

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

CyclePedia 01923 221901
70-78 Merton Road, Watford

Neale & Sons 01923 223916
26 Vicarage Road Precinct, Watford

Cycles UK 01923 243707
484 St. Albans Road, Watford

The Bike Stall Watford Market
thebikestall@aol.com or 07941 800029

Northwood Cycle Depot 01923 824174
118 Pinner Road, Northwood

10% off food & drink at the Café in the Park 08456 800835
The Aquadrome, Frogmoor Lane, Rickmansworth, WD3 1NB

Roger's ride: outside the Plough at Belsize on 24th July



Publicity Officer

Spokes is looking for someone
with enthusiasm to promote Spokes.

Duties would include the occasional press release
and arranging display stands for environmental fairs.

If you feel you can help Spokes reach a wider audience
please contact:

Roger
or another member of the committee.

Seaside Cycling

by Mary Ann, Diana and Brian

Our July cycle trip along the coast of Kent, from Dover to Rochester, was full of contrasts – from the sublime to the ridiculous.

Starting at the Dover seafront, we used a traffic-free cycle route shown on the Sustrans website which joins up with NCN 1 on a road further along the coast. The route sign beside the road said “Wheeling Route”. Ever heard of a Wheeling Route? The route ahead looked like it might be traversing the White Cliffs of Dover, so we wondered if it meant



having to push the bikes. Yes, it did mean pushing the bikes - up hundreds of steps! Cycle route??? Definitely not for touring bikes with laden panniers. Hot and bothered, we got to the top eventually.

The NCN 1 thankfully sailed easily along the top of the cliffs, with crystal clear views across the Channel to France, looking only a stone's throw away. We cycled along the picturesque seafront at Deal and then to Sandwich.

Sandwich is very unusual. It was one of the Cinque Ports in medieval times, but the estuary silted up and left the town two miles from the sea. Further development stopped. It is said to be the best preserved medieval town in the country and is a pleasure to explore by bike.

After Sandwich, the NCN 1 heads inland, so we joined the Viking Coastal Trail, which is promoted for cycling. This took us back to the coast and in to Ramsgate, our stop for the night.

Our hotel was in an attractive Regency terrace, with a balcony and a view of the sea. However, quarters were very cramped, there was no lounge and the breakfast room had space for only a few guests at a time. We decided that we were probably the only tourists. The others were tenants, some working, some on benefits. The hotelier was very odd.

As tourists, we had a very tasty meal at an Italian restaurant by the harbour, but when we went behind the seafront to the rest of the town, we found it very seedy and deprived.

Broadstairs is more genteel and has connections with Dickens.

Margate is the epitome of the traditional seaside resort, but we still found a very handsome and well-restored Tudor house. It wasn't open to the public - presumably because Margate doesn't get many visitors interested in old architecture.

The Viking Coastal Trail hugs the waterfront through all the seaside resorts on the Isle of Thanet, but it is a disappointment for touring cyclists. Thanet Council have put up lots of signs prohibiting cycling along stretches which have beach huts. It would be much more sense to divert the route onto streets behind the huts. We slowed to a fast walking pace rather than dismount, but it spoiled our enjoyment.

The route turns west to Reculver, then to Herne Bay and Whitstable. We had dawdled earlier in the day, so we didn't have time to see the Whitstable waterfront, said to be a very attractive old fishing port.

Forty miles of slow cycling and we finally arrived at our second hotel. Judd's Folly near Faversham was a total contrast to the previous night. For the same price, we had very beautifully furnished rooms, four times the space, and a gourmet restaurant.



The only other guests were a fashionable Italian couple, also cyclists.

Our third and final day continued on NCN 1 to Rochester, using country lanes and coastal country parks. By an extraordinary coincidence, we bumped into a friend of Mary Ann's who was cycling the other way! She was on a charity ride from London to Paris. We'd come 5 miles from the hotel. She'd come 35 miles from Bexley. *Ah, Vive la Spokes pace!*



Chilterns Cycleway

SPOKES have a limited number of guidebooks for the "Chiltern Cycleway" a 170 mile route around the Chilterns, that was launched in June this year.

If you would like a copy at the reduced price of £8.00 contact Mike .

See: www.chilternsaonb.org/cycleway



PHOTOS FROM THE CHILTERN CYCLEWAY LAUNCH RIDE