

Affiliated to: Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC) www.ctc.org.uk
and Cyclenation www.cyclenation.org.uk



SOUTH WEST HERTS SPOKES CYCLING GROUP

A.G.M. & Social Evening

Notice is hereby given that the **Annual General Meeting** of
SPOKES South West Herts Cycling Group
will take place on **Tuesday 12th April 2011 at 7.30pm**
at **The Pump House** (*in the Charles Room*),
Local Board Road, Lower High Street, Watford, WD17 2JP

After the formal business Alan Sweetman from the Groundwork Trust will give a brief talk on Groundwork's organisation and work.

If you have any resolutions or nominations for positions on the next committee, please contact Roger.



Fair Trade coffee and tea available.

We look forward to seeing you there!
Refreshments in the bar afterwards.

The opening of the new bridge over the river Colne in Oxhey Park.



... and the same bridge taken by Lionel on his first ride with Spokes.



Soon the warmer weather will be with us & we can look forward to sunny cycling days.

During the winter the Bridge over the River Colne in Oxhey Park has been opened providing a link from Bushey Arches to the NCR 61 near Century Park.

Work should also be complete on extending the shared use path along the Rickmansworth Road from Cassiobury Park to Park Road via the Toucan Crossing providing a safe route into the residential area.

We have concerns about Watford Councils intention to close the High Street Cycle Path several times a year to allow continental markets, some of your comments have been “thin edge of the wedge”, “loosing hard fought for benefits”, “should be held in other places like Charter Place or Queens Road where it will not impede the flow of pedestrians & cyclists”.

During the summer we will be looking for support to promote SPOKES & Cycling at local events, including Rickmansworth Environmental Fair, Croxley Revels & some Watford High Street promotional events. Please consider offering some of your time to promote these activities.

I hope to see you at our AGM at the Pump House Tuesday on 12 April, join us for a drink in the bar afterwards.

New Committee Members Wanted

Spokes is looking for someone with inspiration to promote & publicise the group.

We also need someone to look after our cycling & sales material.

These roles could be done by one or two people.

If you are interested in standing for these or any other role please let Roger or one of the committee know.

We thank Mike for being our Merchandise Officer in recent years.

ABBOTS LANGLEY TRANSITION TOWN ASSOCIATION

Spokes have been invited to take part in an event at Henderson Hall, High St. Abbots Langley, at 10.30 - 12.30 on 5th March with a view to promoting Spokes and cycling.

What is a transition town? Totnes in Devon was the first, started by Rob Hopkins, to become a dynamic community-led charity, strengthening the local economy to become more self-reliant in terms of food, energy, employment and economics. The aim is to harness the untapped power of engaged optimism, and in the last five years the movement has grown to over 400 groups in England, apparently including Ambridge!

"The Transition Handbook" by Rob Hopkins was published by Green Books in 2008. Patrick Holden, director of the Soil Association says:

"The Transition concept is one of the big ideas of our time. Peak oil and climate change can so often leave one depressed and disempowered. What I love about the Transition approach is that it is inspirational, harnessing hope instead of guilt, and optimism instead of fear. The Transition Handbook will come to be seen as one of the seminal books which emerged at the end of the Oil Age and which offered a gentle helping hand in the transition to a more local, more human, and ultimately more nourishing future".

To Google Transition Towns is to find more inspirational information, and I hope Spokes members will see this as something they would wish to support by coming along, and offers to help on the stall would be welcome.

Maureen

SPOKES RIDES & EVENTS

MARCH / APRIL / MAY 2011

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

Thursday 3 March

20.00

Spokes Social Evening

Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford

We are normally in the rear section of the pub. A chance to have a chat while enjoying a drink and a curry (*or other dish*). Diana

Saturday 5 March

10.00 – 16.00

Abbots Langley Transition Town Association (ALTTA)

Henderson Hall, Abbots Langley Volunteers needed to promote the Spokes SW Herts Cycling Group alongside other local community groups. See article on previous page for more information. Maureen

Sunday 6 March

11.00

Abbots Langley

Henderson Hall, Abbots Langley Follow up circular ride in conjunction with ALTTA (*see above*) for all cyclists with a choice of a slow short ride or a normal longer one; combined lunch stop at a pub or café in the area.

6 or 10 - 15 miles Slow/Medium

Maureen / Diane



Thursday 17 March 11.00 St. Patrick's Day Odyssey

Garston Medical Centre South Mymms via Bricket Wood
and Alban Way mainly road with lunch stop return via Shenley.
25 miles Slow Vince C



Thursday 17 March 20.30 Rance's Rockin' Chair Band

Pump House Theatre Come and enjoy some traditional jazz.
Diana

Saturday 19 March 10.30 Woodys' Wander

Watford Metropolitan Station Canal towpath and country lanes for
refreshments at Woodys vegetarian café near Hemel Hempstead.
18 miles Medium Iain

Sunday 20 March 10.30 Chiltern Ride with Harrow Cyclists

Amersham Station Joint ride with Harrow Cyclists into the Chilterns
from Amersham with a small section of off road.
20-25 miles Medium/Fast Check with Rides co-ordinator

Wednesday 23 March 10.00

Pump House Theatre, Local Board Road, Watford
Ebury Way, Moor Park, Bushey. Return along
Colne Valley way. Refreshment stop to be negotiated.
25 miles Medium John



Saturday 2 April 14.00

Ride for Less Experienced Cyclists (LEC)

Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Following continued demand –
this is an easy ride designed for inexperienced or rusty riders who want to
try out cycling or regain confidence with support and uses mostly off road
routes. 5 miles Slow Check with Rides co-ordinator.

Saturday 2 April 08.00

France Day Trip with East Kent Spokes

Dover Eastern Docks Booking Office Ferry Dover to Calais then canal
ride of about 20k slow to Ardres- a nice town with even nicer restaurants.
Expected return around 6.00pm- for more information refer to:

www.spokeseastkent.org.uk/events.php, for transport sharing please ensure early contact.
Andrew / Steve

Tuesday 5 April 10.00

Tuesday Easy Ride

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley

The start of the regular Tuesday short rides.

10 - 15 miles Slow Roger



Thursday 7 April 20.00

Spokes Social Evening

Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford

We are normally in the rear section of the pub. A chance to have a chat while enjoying a drink and a curry (*or other dish*). Diana

Saturday 9 April 10.00

Scenic But Hilly

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Cycle though Belsize, Ashley Green then around Berkhamsted on the Chiltern Cycle Way to a pub at Potten End for lunch, return via Bedmond.

32 miles Medium Roger

Tuesday 12 April 19.30

Spokes AGM

Pump House, Watford *See front page for details...*

Saturday 16 April 11.00

London Colney

Garston Medical Centre Ride to London Colney, some off-road with a café stop. 12 miles Medium Vince E

Saturday 30 April 11.00

Royal NCN 61 Excursion

High Street Station NCN61 through Bricket Wood to St Albans via Greenwood Park and return. 25 miles Slow Vince C

Saturday 7 May 10.30

Andrew's Aldenham Adventure

Garston Medical Centre Ride to Aldenham with a café stop and finishing at Cha Cha Cha café to align with Watford community support ride. 14 miles Slow Andrew



Saturday 7 May 14.00

Ride for Less Experienced Cyclists (LEC)

Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Easy ride for inexperienced or rusty riders who want to try out cycling or regain confidence with support.
5 miles Slow Check with Rides co-ordinator

Sunday 8 May 10.30

Bike to Butterfly World

Garston Medical Centre Ride in the Bedmond/Chiswell Green area for a chance to visit Butterfly World. Bring a picnic or visit the Nectar House Café. Admission £7 (*group discount & concessions may i*
See www.butterflyworldproject.com for more details.
15 miles Medium Iain



Tuesday 10 May 10.00

Tuesday Easy Ride

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley The regular Tuesday easy short ride, open to all. 10 - 15 miles Slow Roger

Tuesday 10 May 19.30

Spokes Committee Meeting

For more information contact Roger.

Thursday 12 May 20.00

Spokes Social Evening

Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford

We are normally in the rear section of the pub. A chance to have a chat while enjoying a drink and a curry (*or other dish*). Diana

Saturday 14 May 10.00

Wembley FA Cup Final Ride

Watford Metropolitan Station Joint ride with Harrow Cyclists - FA Cup Final trip to Wembley for 4th event (*possible train journey*) Brent cycleway and drinks at the Ace Café before returning along the Grand Union Canal.
26 miles Slow David



Sunday 15 May 11.00

Moor Mill and Bricket Wood

Watford High Street Station Short outing with stop at Moor Mill back via Bricket Wood and Munden. 12 - 15 miles Medium Phil

Friday 20 May 10.00 Chiltern Lanes

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley A meander through the Chiltern lanes with a refreshment stop. 25 miles Medium John

Saturday / Sunday 21 / 22 May Rickmansworth Environment Fair

Aquadrome Volunteers needed to help out on the stall. Roger

Thursday 26 May 20.00 Spokes Social Evening



Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford

We are normally in the rear section of the pub. A chance to have a chat while enjoying a drink and a curry (*or other dish*).
Diana

Saturday 28 May 11.00 - 16.00 Spokes Publicity Event

Watford High Street Spokes stall to publicise the benefit of cycling and to promote membership along with a fun competition for all ages – **VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED** - for more information, please contact a member of the committee or Rides co-ordinator.

Looking Forwards to the Summer Programme

18 June Croxley Revels on the Green

Volunteers needed to man the stall

19 - 26 June Team Green Britain Bike Week

Many rides due in conjunction with nationwide activities

30 June Spokes Social Evening

24 - 26 June Peak District Weekend at Hartington Hall

with Mary-Ann. David

July Fold-up Bike Ride in London

Ride in conjunction with Folding Society

Quarterly Quotations

"As a kid I had a dream — I wanted to own my own bicycle. When I got the bike I must have been the happiest boy in Liverpool, maybe the world. I lived for that bike. Most kids left their bikes in the backyard at night. Not me. I insisted on taking mine indoors and the first night I even kept it by my bed. "

John Lennon

"A person ignorant of the possibility of failure can be a half-brick in the path of the bicycle of history. "

Terry Pratchett (*Equal Rites*)

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="text"/> | Other / Spokes newsletter at other location |

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 | |



The **Deadline** for the Summer Newsletter
is **11 May 2011.**

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

30 Days of Biking

1st April - 30th April

Submitted by David C

30 Days of Biking was founded by a small group of cycling enthusiasts based in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Last April they encouraged people in the city to ride their bikes every day for the whole month, and then tweet about it on Twitter.

The idea spread across the globe and the following September, over five hundred people joined in the fun. Spring is nearly upon us, and cyclists from all over the world will soon be pledging to cycle every day from the 1st - 30th April.

Why not join them?



April 2011					
M		4	11	18	25
T		5	12	19	26
W		6	13	20	27
T		7	14	21	28
F	1	8	15	22	29
S	2	9	16	23	30
S	3	10	17	24	

The only rule for 30 Days of Biking is that you bike every day for 30 days - around the block, 20 miles to work, whatever suits you - then share your adventures online.

More details can be found at **30daysofbiking.com**,
and you can follow

@30daysofbiking on Twitter (www.twitter.com/30daysofbiking).

Each day, tell everyone where you've been by using the
#30daysofbiking hashtag.

There's also a Facebook page (www.fb.com/30daysofbiking)
you can join to encourage your friends to participate.

Hertfordshire Cycling Forum Meeting

On Tuesday January 18th, David and I attended the twice yearly meeting of the Hertfordshire Cycling Forum. The Forum exists to enable representatives of cycling groups in the county, as well as other interested parties, such as Friends of the Earth and Sustrans, to meet with members of HCC and others to discuss cycling matters.

The main item on the agenda for this meeting was the Cycling Strategy Review, which is taking place this year. The HCC Cycling Strategy, produced in 2007, is a 'daughter' document to the Local Transport Plan (LTP). Its two headline objectives are as follows:

- More people cycling more often as a convenient, quick, healthy and sustainable form of transport for short journeys.
- More people cycling more often as an activity that contributes positively to the primary shared local transport objectives.

The Strategy sets out how these objectives may be achieved, although it does not contain programmes for project delivery, as these are the responsibility of local transport plans, supported by the cycling strategies of district councils along with the strategic County network. For further info see **www.hertsdirect.org**.

The main part of the meeting on January 18th was devoted to workshops, where we worked in groups to provide input into how the Cycling Strategy should be revised. The first task was to identify the groups in society most likely to be willing to take up cycling or to increase the amount of cycling they already do. Following on from this, the second task involved thinking up effective measures to achieve a shift to cycling journeys from other modes of transport. Suggestions put forward included, understandably, developing the cycling infrastructure, making the roads safer and getting local cycling groups, districts, boroughs and other organisations to work together to increase cycling. These suggestions will be fed into the consultation process taking place this year.

NEW YEAR RIDE REPORT

Sunday 2nd January

David T

A lovely winter's day dawned over Ealing as cyclists from the mixed groups of London, including Spokes planned to attend this 22 mile ride on January 2nd. It was cold but dry. A total of 62 people gathered at the entrance to Ealing Town Hall turned up for this special opening of the year ride making this a personal record for our ride leader, Brian.

A part from Spokes, people came from London meet up groups, Harrow Cyclists, Harrow and Wembley Outdoor group, the Perivale Gang and a very large number from Ealing cyclists maybe partly inspired by the Ealing Skyride last August. Our leader took us through the back streets and paths of Ealing out west via Greenford and Southall to Hillingdon Cycle circuit in Minet Park. This is a 0.93 mile closed road circuit designed specifically for cycling and so participants shot off to do their best on one or two laps. It is a bit exposed and some of us noticed the cold as we turned up the speed. Our leader then led us off through some parkland with some of those gates that are made for walkers and cyclists to go through separately and not together. On the far side of this was Hayes BMX track, perhaps not so good for the road and mountain bikes but a good place to wait whilst the rest of the group caught up after the exhilaration of the Hillingdon circuit.



From here we sought out Stockley Park golf club in which was the prominent Stockley Hill which makes great viewing of planes taking off from Heathrow. From the golf course we headed for a tea/coffee stop at a nearby cafe and pub. Away from here we headed north where most of the 62 cyclists negotiated some more non-cycle friendly gates and steps leading to the Grand Union Canal; a long ride on the towpath and we came out onto a road taking us past Hillingdon Hospital to Hillingdon Green for a stop to repair a puncture or two rather than seek medical attention. East of here was the Black Horse in Greenford. Most of the group stopped here for a very late lunch but in great company and a chance to talk about our different club experiences and to consider if the numbers might double again on this ride next year.





Bridge over the River Colne Ride by Veronica C

A group of 9 assembled at Bushey station and swept down the hill to the new Oxhey Park bridge for the first photo opp. Our leader David had enjoined us to count all the bridges we passed. Some got to 27 (*or was it 17?*) and there was much discussion about whether a bridge over a land drain counted. His warning to us to expect **MUD** 'at the beginning and in the middle' was incomplete.



On the Colne Valley cycle trail we were rapidly embalmed in mud and had to lift our bikes over a fallen tree - triumphant teamwork. Ian had the good sense to get his puncture, the only one of the day, within 200 yards of the Crooked Billet at Colney Heath where we enjoyed delicious fresh food, real ales and ciders.



One of David's key objectives, the River Colne's source, proved elusive. He spent time in a field with a young woman who apparently showed him a new route, but that's for another day. We saw the 14th century North Myms church and bucolic park before another face-spattering descent and challenging climb up a bridleway. Flagging slightly by this point, we passed a runner on the downhill at Shenley, only to have him catch us on the uphill. Sustrans route 6, the Colne Ver Valley Walk and Bricket Wood took us back to Watford, where the crossing of the A41 is very poorly-phased for cyclists - one for the traffic engineers in conjunction with Spokes recommendations?

Many thanks to David and companions for a great ride - and we have now joined Spokes!

