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www.ctc.org.uk
www.cyclenation.org.uk
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CycleHerts
Hertfordshire Cycling Groups

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 17th April 2012 at 7.30pm**
at **The Pump House** (*in the Charles Room*),
Local Board Road, Lower High Street, Watford, WD17 2JP

After the formal business **Simon Geller** will talk to us about
Cyclenation its aims and objectives & how it can assist SPOKES.

If you would like to join the committee or propose any resolutions,
please contact the committee.



Fair Trade coffee and tea available.

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

WEB www.spokesgroup.com FACEBOOK on.fb.me/spokesfb
E-MAIL info@spokesgroup.com TWITTER [twitter.com@spokesgroup](https://twitter.com/spokesgroup)

SPRING: MARCH / APRIL / MAY 2012 ISSUE # 72

Sky Ride Local

British Cycling **Sky Ride Local** is coming to Hertfordshire!!

Through the **Sky Ride Local** programme, British Cycling aims to inspire more people to have fun on two wheels and include riding within their lives.

Rides vary in appeal by route type, length & terrain to fall into 4 categories:

Ride Easy, Ride Steady, Ride Well, Ride Strong.

So whatever type of cyclist, whether new, lapsed, wannabe commuters, leisure or regular, there's sure to be one of some 75 supported rides over the summer period in Watford, Dacorum & St Albans for you.

In addition to participating there's the opportunity of helping others by qualifying for **FREE** as a British Cycling **Sky Ride Local** Ride Leader & Route Planner. The first two courses are being held in Hatfield Sat 18 & Sun 19 Feb, but there will be more courses proposed:

	Sky Ride Local Ride Leaders	Sky Ride Local Route Planners
Watford	24 March & 31 March	25 March
Hemel Hempstead	31 March & 14 April	25 March
St Albans	17 March & 14 April	1 April

For more details & course application form:

<http://www.goskyride.com/News/ShowArticle/Train-to-be-a-Sky-Ride-Leader>

If you have any queries contact: recreation@britishcycling.org.uk or
Nick Chamberlin, Operational Support Manager, Recreation and Partnerships,
British Cycling, National Cycling Centre, Stuart Street, Manchester, M11 4DQ
Telephone: +44 (0)161 274 2006

I got involved with the Sky Ride Local programme in Aylesbury last year, both Ride Leading & Route Planning... & loved it! I've had my British Cycling contract renewed... so will be able to get involved again this year... on my doorstep – brilliant!!

I've also been invited to the **Herts Sky Ride Local Steering Group Meetings**, so if you want a personal view of getting involved or have ideas for maximising the opportunities of; the programme in Watford and/or Spokes, don't hesitate to contact me; Kate:

Publicity

Encouraging more people to enjoy cycling and campaigning for better conditions for cyclists are at the core of Spokes. As such, Spokes has a tradition of publicising & supporting initiatives to achieve those aims.

Without a doubt, 2012 is a significant year for cycling.

In addition to the opportunities that abound throughout the year, Herts County Council through the “Big Herts Big Ideas” Local Sustainable Transport Fund initiative for Watford, Dacorum & St Albans are embracing a number of cycling initiatives:

- Sky Ride Local; training being provided in February & March with rides anticipated to start in June
- Challenge For Change; a behavioural change programme to get more people cycling

To contribute and make a difference we need small teams of members to provide energy, support, skills & contacts to help:

- focus and coordinate our attention
- ensure events are fresh and full of vitality
- prevent reliance upon the stalwart few

What could you do to help?

How would you like to get involved?

Events to get behind:

March

The Big Pedal – 5th to 23rd March <http://thebigpedal.org.uk>
Stuart Duncan, Sustrans recently appointed Bike It Officer for the area is working with several schools in the area.
With Stuart's help, I'll keep you posted of ways that you can get involved.
Contact Kate

April

Challenge for Change has a proven record in designing, developing and implementing innovative and highly effective behavioural change programmes that are consistently proven to get more people cycling, more often.

The main aims of the Cycle Challenge programme are:

April

- To encourage people who are not currently cycling to start cycling;
- To encourage occasional cyclists to start cycling regularly;
- To encourage people to cycle for transport purposes.

<http://www.challengeforchange.com>

Whilst centrally coordinated there will be opportunities for Spokes and Spokes members to get involved.

May

Watford's **Celebration! 2012 "Community Pulling Together"**

May Bank Holiday – Monday 7 May

Volunteers needed to plan & man, so the Spokes stall stands out.

Contact Kate

Rickmansworth Festival 2012

Saturday 19 & Sunday 20 May

Spokes has regularly provided support by taking a stall. The event falls between **Workwise Week** that promotes **Work From Home Day** on Friday 18 May and the **Walk To School / Free Your Feet** initiatives for schools.

Help me to bring the events together to provide a theme for the stall together with a build-up & follow-on.

<http://www.rwt.org.uk/festival/2012>

<http://www.workwiseuk.org>

<http://www.walktoschool.org.uk>

June

Bike Week 2012

Saturday 16 to Sunday 24 June

<http://www.bikeweek.org.uk>

Croxley Revels

Saturday 23 June

<http://www.croxleyrevels.co.uk>

With your help, the prospect of **Sky Ride Locals** and the Peace Hospices sponsored **Pedal For Peace** just a month away, we could really make an impact this year! Help me bring a team together, access the resources available to support a series of cycling events throughout the week.

Contact Kate

July

Pedal For Peace 2012

Sunday 15 July

<https://www.peacehospice.co.uk>

Planning is already under way to make this the best year yet! Participate, marshal, man the stand – just enjoy getting involved. At short notice, last year Spokes provided an fun obstacle course alongside our stand. This year the Hospice are adding a family ride to the 3 main rides. Let's help to make this a fun, family day supporting a truly worthwhile cause.

Contact Kate

August

I'm sure the Olympics and Sky Ride Local will throw up opportunities. If you have any ideas for promoting Spokes – feel free to share and we'll look to set something up.

September

World Carfree Day

Saturday 22 September

<http://www.worldcarfree.net>

Come forward with ideas that we could link with.

Love London, Go Dutch

Launched in February by the London Cycling Campaign, "Love London, Go Dutch" aims to encourage London's prospective mayoral candidates to commit to improving the quality of bicycle infrastructure in the city, using our European counterparts as a benchmark for what is possible. The thinking behind the campaign is that the city as a whole, and vulnerable road users such as pedestrians in particular, benefit from the improvements made to cycling infrastructure. In short, "going Dutch" would make London a better city for all.

Supported by the Dutch Embassy, with Brompton as the principal sponsor.

<http://lcc.org.uk/pages/go-dutch> for more information / to sign petition.

Another Spokes Group...

from Mary Ann (*our roving reporter*) in California

Through the shop where I bought a very good second hand bike for £63,
I found out about another Spokes group!

Their motto is:

Why re-invent the wheel, when you can tighten the spokes?

Richmond Spokes' is a bit different. Their *About Us*, may be wordy, but let them tell you in their own words:

Richmond Spokes is a 501 (c) 3 entrepreneurial youth training program located in Richmond, California. We empower young entrepreneurs to design, plan, market and execute their ideas. Youth participants in Richmond Spokes provide local, national, and international cyclists with professional bicycle services, sales and accessories. Our staff consists of cycle cultured adults who partner with youth participants to make Richmond a greener, safer and more sustainable city. Through Education, Empowerment, Employment, and Engagement, Richmond Spokes encourages self-sufficiency, job skill training, educational opportunities, and a culture of stewards who use cycling and sustainable transportation to enable physical, personal, and professional mobility.

<https://sites.google.com/a/richmondspokes.org/about/>

Membership Secretary Required

We will need a membership secretary to take over from Dara as he is standing down from next April. He is willing to support any volunteer who takes up the post.

Duties include:

- Maintaining membership database
- Printing labels and letters for newsletter distribution / reminders
- Banking cheques; liaising with treasurer
- Occasional e-mails to members regarding change of event / breaking news

Please contact Roger or Dara if you are interested.

Members Nights

Hosted by the embryonic "Watford Cycle Hub"
in their facilities at

**Pavilion 2, Holywell Community Centre,
Chaffinch Lane (off Tolpits Lane), WD18 9QD**

we offer a series of "*Members Nights*"
19.00 - 21.30 most **Wednesdays***
from **14th March 2012.**

Enjoy relaxed, sociable evenings to exchange cycling passions, ideas, opinions, experiences & pool knowledge to help support and guide a dynamic direction for Spokes Cycling Group well into the future.

Come along & help decide the frequency and format of member evenings; talks, workshops, cycling films Watford Cycle Hub's tools and work bays will be available for use along with tea, coffee and biscuits.

"Watford Cycle Hub", establishing as a community interest company, aims to create a focal point to promote cycling as an enjoyable, sociable, safe, viable and healthy, sustainable form of transport that overcomes constraints of economic & cultural barriers and present employment opportunities. A 'hub', whose spokes reach out into the Watford community of residents, schools & businesses. Central to the operation is the reconditioning of bikes otherwise destined to rust in a shed or landfill. Come & learn more & bring any unwanted bikes you're happy to donate with you.

* To check dates and for more information
please contact Kate

Do you want to get involved with promoting cycling over the next year? Cycling is moving up the political agenda both nationally & locally as more people are cycling.

Cyclenation is improving its co-ordination of the many cycle campaigning organisations enabling it to have a greater influence on our politicians. They are keen to speak to local cycling groups; we have arranged for Simon Geller, the secretary of *Cyclenation*, to speak to us at our AGM in April. See **www.cyclenation.org.uk** or follow on Facebook.

Local campaigning should now improve following the formation of *CycleHerts* **www.cycleherts.org.uk** a federation of cycling groups in Hertfordshire, hoping to liaise more effectively with Hertfordshire County council to improve cycling facilities. This year the County Council should be promoting cycling through BIG HERTS BIG IDEAS especially in the Hemel, St Albans, Watford triangle. We may even have some Sky Rides in this area. Are you able to lead or join a Sky Ride?

Have you noticed the 20's plenty campaign has kicked off in Watford. This is being organised by local residents, but is something we defiantly support for residential areas.

A noteworthy item in the Winter Newsletter by David C was an item on cycle parking on Solomon Hill, Rickmansworth. We now have new, quality well placed racks. *Is this a coincidence or the power of local lobbying?!*

Do come along to our AGM at the Pump House. This will allow you to give your ideas & discuss the way forward locally in promoting cycling. We also have a key role to fill on the committee. We will need a membership secretary capable of keeping membership information & producing address labels four times a year. Could you help us with this? Help will be given.

Maybe you could help with our stalls at Rickmansworth Environmental Fair or Croxley Revels, we would also like to arrange another weekend away similar to last years successful event, but we do need an organiser.

Do come and talk to us at the AGM, your participation is vital to an effective cycling organisation.

SPOKES RIDES & EVENTS

MARCH / APRIL / MAY 2012

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 8th March 10.00

Black Jack's Mill

Pump House, Local Board Road Ride along the Ebury Way and Colne Valley Trail and probably have a cuppa at the Aquadrome.

Medium 20 miles Dennis

Wednesday 14th March 19.00

Members Night

See separate article for more details...

Saturday 17th March 10.00

Roger's Chiltern Bike Ride

(also Charity training ride 1 - first of a series providing road based ride for those wanting to prepare for charity events later in the year)

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green

Cycle though Belsize, Ashley Green & Berkhamsted to the canal side pub at Winkwell for lunch. Some hills.

Medium 26 miles Roger



Wednesday 21st March 19.00

Members Night

Thursday 22nd March 20.00

Spokes Social Evening

Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford A chance to have a chat while enjoying a curry & drink. We are normally in the rear section of the pub; look for the Spokes newsletter on a table. Diana



Saturday 24th March 10.00 March Hare Ride

Coach and Horses, Croxley Green Into the Chess Valley and back with lunch stop at the end. Slow 15 miles Vince

Sunday 25th March 09.30 Sustrans Maintenance Ride

Rickmansworth Aquadrome Joint ride with Sustrans from Rickmansworth to Bricket Wood. Fix minor maintenance issues on National Cycle Route 61. Medium 12 miles one way. Contact Roger in advance of ride

Wednesday 28th March 19.00 Members Night

Saturday 31st March 10.00 Chipperfield Café

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green Ride "Under the Heavens" to Belsize, Bovington and Flaunden. Medium 22 miles Dennis

Wednesday 4th April 19.00 Members Night

Saturday 7th April 14.00 1st LEC Ride of 2012

(Less Experienced Cyclists) followed by Easter Egg Hunt

Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park This is an easy ride for inexperienced or rusty riders who want to try out cycling or regain confidence with support from more experienced riders wanting an easy afternoon out and cup of tea to finish. Slow 5-8 miles Pam

Saturday 7th April 15.30 Easter Egg Hunt For Children



Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Hunt for Easter eggs in the Cassiobury Park area. Suitable for children aged 5-11, younger ones should be accompanied by their parents. Entry fee possible. Event details and Volunteer assistance David

Tuesday 10th April 10.00 Tuesday Morning Ride

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green Easy morning ride, back around 12.30. Slow 18 miles Roger

Wednesday 11th April 19.00 Members Night

Saturday 14th April 10.30 A Grand Day Out

Watford Metropolitan Station Towpath of the Grand Union Canal and country lanes for lunch at the award winning vegetarian café Woodys.
www.woodyscafe.co.uk Medium 18 miles Iain

Sunday 15th April 10.00 St Albans Museum Joint Ride

Garston Medical Centre (Sainsbury's car park) Cycle ride with opportunity to meet up with Barnet Cyclists in Shenley Park for a tea/coffee followed by a joint ride to visit the 1960's exhibition in St Albans Museum before it closes on 22 April.
Medium 22 miles David (*Spokes*) Charles (*Barnet*)

Tuesday 17th April 19.30 Annual General Meeting

Pump House, Local Board Road Annual General Meeting (*see details on front cover*). Roger

Wednesday 18th April 19.00 Members Night



Saturday 21st April 10.00 Flaunden ► Blue Book Ride No 12

Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Ride to Flaunden mostly along quiet lanes via Sarratt and Belsize.
Medium 18 miles Errol

Wednesday 25th April 19.00 Members Night

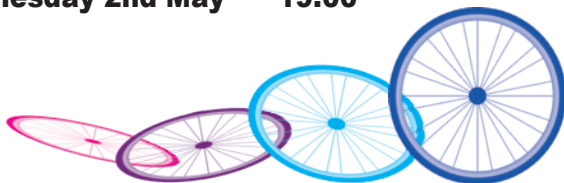
Thursday 26th April 20.00 Spokes Social Evening

Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford A chance to have a chat while enjoying a curry & drink. We are normally in the rear section of the pub; look for the Spokes newsletter on a table. Diana

Saturday 28th April 10.00 Colne Valley Park Ride

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green Canalside ride from the Aquadrome to the Centre at Denham country park via towpath. Lunch at café or nearby pub, with a possible visit to the White House on the way.
Slow 20 miles Vince

Wednesday 2nd May 19.00 Members Night



Saturday 5th May 10.00 FA Cup Final Ride Special

Lower High Street Station Annual FA inspired trip to enjoy the quiet paths and lanes around Wembley along with a trip up Wembley Way well in advance of the big match and a cuppa or late breakfast at the famous Ace Café. Scenic return aided by canal towpath and other off road sections. Slow 24 miles David

Saturday 5th May 14.00 2nd Ride for



Less Experienced Cyclists

Cha Cha Cha Café, Cassiobury Park Easy ride for inexperienced or rusty riders who want to try out cycling or regain confidence with support from more experienced riders wanting an easy afternoon out and cup of tea to finish. Slow 5-8 miles Bob

Tuesday 8th May 10.00 Tuesday Morning Ride

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley Green An easy morning ride, back around 12.30. Slow 18 miles Roger

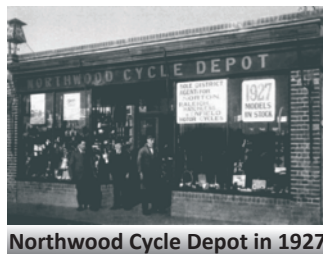
Tuesday 8th May 18.00 Tuesday Evening Ride

London Irish Club, Deacons Hill, Watford Hopefully first of four Tuesday evening rides to make use of longer evenings. Terrain will be mainly towpaths, tracks and minor lanes to Commonwood for beer stop. Bring **lights** but expect to return before dark. Medium 15 miles Steve

Wednesday 9th May 19.00 Members Night

Saturday 12th May 14.00 Andy's Unusual Bike Ride

Pump House, Local Board Road
Ride to Northwood Cycle Depot and Museum for Tea & Biscuits. We would like unusual bikes or fold up bikes & tandems but we would also like lots of cyclists and support. Lots of unusual bikes to see at the shop from Raleigh Chopper to bike with sidecar. If your bike is unridable then come & meet us at the shop with said bike. Medium 7 miles Andy



Northwood Cycle Depot in 1927

Wednesday 16th May 19.00 Members Night

Saturday 19th May 10.00 Gorhambury
(also charity training ride 2)

Pump House, Local Board Road Ride via Bricket Wood and Chiswell Green mostly on roads and return after a cuppa in the park at St Albans.
Medium 25 miles Dennis

Saturday / Sunday 19th & 20th May Ricky Environmental Fair
Help required for SPOKES stall. Kate

Sunday 20th May 08.00 Michael Sobell Hospice
Sponsored Bike Ride

A range of road routes to enable cyclists to raise funds for the Hospice.
Also marshals required. Details www.michaelsobellhouse.co.uk/events.htm

Sunday 20th May 10.00 St. Luke's Hospice
Pledge to Pedal Sponsored Bike Ride

Byron Recreation Ground, Peel Road, Wealdstone HA3 7QX
Choice of 15 and 30 mile circular route around Harrow & Brent, so whether you're a beginner or an avid cyclist you can get involved and take part. This is being run in conjunction with Harrow Cyclists.
<http://www.stlukes-hospice.org/events/St+Lukes+Events/Pledge+to+Pedal>

Wednesday 23rd May 19.00 Members Night

Thursday 24th May 20.00 Spokes Social Evening
Moon Under Water, High Street, Watford A chance to have a chat while enjoying a curry & drink. We are normally in the rear section of the pub, look for the Spokes newsletter on a table. Diana

Wednesday 30th May 19.00 Members Night



Looking Forwards to the Summer Programme

Tuesday 12th June Tuesday Evening Ride Sarratt

Friday 15th June Michael Sobell Hospice Ladies in the Night Walk
Marshalling support opportunity - for details contact Rides Coordinator

Saturday 16th to Sunday 24th June National Bike Week

Thursday 24th June Spokes Social Evening

Committee

If you would like to join the committee
there will be an opportunity at the
forthcoming **AGM**
on **Tuesday 17th April 2012.**

Please let the committee know
if you are interested.

How To Help

How did you find out about Spokes?

☐

Personal recommendation

☐

On a cycle ride

☐

Cycleopedia

☐

Neale & Sons

☐

Northwood Cycle Depot

☐

Other

☐

Web-site

☐

Library

☐

Cycles UK

☐

The Bike Stall (Watford Market)

☐

Environmental Fair

Why do you cycle?

Can you help with any of the following?

☐

Organising cycle rides

☐

Surveying of routes

☐

Cartography / CAD

☐

Newsletter articles / artwork

☐

Merchandising

☐

Other *(please specify)* _____

☐

Publicity, promotions & press

☐

Legal work

☐

Social events

☐

Campaigning & lobbying local councils

☐

Supporting with administration



The **Deadline** for the Summer Newsletter
is **9th May 2012**

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



Title First Name

Surname

Address

.....

.....

Post Code Telephone

Amount £ Donation £ *Cheques payable to SPOKES please*

E-mail:



SPOKES DISCOUNTS

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

Cycleopedia 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

Quarterly Quotation

"Bicycling . . . is the nearest approximation I know to the flight of birds. The airplane simply carries a man on its back like an obedient Pegasus; it gives him no wings of his own. There are movements on a bicycle corresponding to almost all the variations in the flight of the larger birds. Plunging free downhill is like a hawk stooping. On the level stretches you may pedal with a steady rhythm like a heron flapping; or you may, like an accipitrine hawk, alternate rapid pedaling with gliding. If you want to test the force and direction of the wind, there is no better way than to circle, banked inward, like a turkey vulture. When you have the wind against you, headway is best made by yawing or wavering, like a crow flying upwind. I have climbed a steep hill by circling or spiraling, rising each time on the upturn with the momentum of the downturn, like any soaring bird. I have shot in and out of stalled traffic like a goshawk through the woods."

**Birdwatching author Louis J. Halle
'Spring in Washington', 1947**



Sunday 8th January

Alison / David

Another cycling adventure occurred on 8 January as Spokes and Central London CTC joined forces to investigate rumours of spy networks at the Green Dragon at Flaunden. In total there were 18 including a number of CTC who had come via central London and caught the train to meet us at Watford Junction. The weather was incredibly mild for a January day and we had no rain. We stopped off at the *Café Amici* in Croxley Green to give everyone a chance to have a hot drink before we got going. There were lots of hills on this ride but the company was good and so it kept our spirits up whilst some struggled to climb the hills.

The ride was based on a spy theme, partly real spies and also some fictional ones. Stopping for lunch at the Green Dragon, we were reminded that this is where the famous Guy Burgess used to visit on a regular basis before he defected to the Soviet Union in May 1951 with his fellow spy Donald Maclean. Both were later dubbed the Cambridge spies. Now in 2012, the Green Dragon was filled with lots of fluorescent jackets and safety helmets as members of Watford Spokes, Central London CTC and another CTC group swapped stories of cycling intrigue whilst enjoying the delights of a very nice Thai meal brought to us by strangers from Asia. On the way back we stopped in Sarratt where our ride leader Charles pointed out a House that he believed had been used as one of the important settings in the George Smiley spy novel.

We then cycled back to Watford and we are looking forward to more joint CTC and Spokes rides as we thanked Charles for his excellent leadership.



**Sunday 8th January
Spyride**





**... and checking the route
in the the snow & ice !**

