



I think they should have gone the udder way

Other captions on a postcard please !

Chairman's Chat – Roger Bangs

Winter Cycling

Our seasons change in a distinctive way, we are now at the end of a colourful Autumn with most people looking forward to Christmas & probably less cycling in the winter.

There have been fewer organised rides recently due to lack of leaders, but we have had some good rides with between six & twelve people, which is an ideal number when cycling on our local lanes & tracks.

Many members are never seen except on social occasions, but it's good to know they support us in encouraging others to cycle and in our efforts to get better & safer cycling routes.

Changes in SPOKES

A small core of members is now organising SPOKES activities. Dara is now settling into his second life as Membership Secretary with challenges ahead in adopting the British Cycling membership system, which should make our admin. less demanding in the future.

We now have a different Bank Account that will enable members to pay subscriptions by bank transfer in the future. When renewing you membership please ensure we have your current email address.

We need a few more members to be involved in running SPOKES particularly: Managing our web-site, organising the rides and promoting SPOKES. If you can help in any of these areas it will be good to have you on board.

Campaigning

A small group of members now regularly meet to identify & discuss local issues effecting cycling. If you are interested in this work please contact us via info@spokesgroup.org.uk

SPOKES has always been involved in campaigning for improved cycling routes & is consulted on most changes that are likely to affect cyclists. We offer suggestions and constructive criticism to the Highways and local District Authorities. It is always useful if members contact local councillors giving their view on what should happen in their area.

We intend to produce a schedule of local improvements that could be made to the cycling infrastructure and for this we need suggestions from you !! If you have a pet gripe or issue that makes cycling difficult please send details about it to the email address above.

What do you think about the maintenance on some of the cycle routes ? Often money is spent on providing cycling routes, but then due to lack of minor maintenance such as cutting back shrubs and trees or repairing potholes it becomes difficult to use. If you see such issues please report it to the council or councillors.

Some Good news has been the recent work in providing shared use paths on South Way, from Hunton Bridge towards Leavesden Country Park and Gade Avenue, Watford.

The removal of the dedicated cycle paths on Watford High St. and creation of a shared-use space for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled persons had become a problem with market stalls occupying much of the central area. We believe the council has now recognised this and is trying to ensure continuous access is now available for all users.

Other issues effecting cyclist include:

- Link road to Watford General Hospital.
- Ascot Road shared-use paths close to the proposed Cassiobury Station.
- Watford High St., from Queens Road to Local Board Road.
- St Albans Road, from Dome Roundabout towards Garston.
- Cassiobury Park.
- Access to the new schools that may be built in Croxley Green and Rickmansworth.

Membership

Save a cheque, an envelope and a stamp!!

You can now pay your Spokes membership subscription renewals by Bank Transfer!!

If you use electronic/internet banking just go on to your account and go on to 'Payments and Transfers' (or whatever your bank calls them) and set up a payment to a 'New Payee'.

The details you will need are :-

1. Name of Payee – SPOKES SW Herts Cycling Group
2. Sort Code – 20-91-79
3. Account Number – 63401626

AND MOST IMPORTANTLY

4. A Payee Reference – This is your Spokes Membership Number

If you omit your Spokes Membership Number the Membership Secretary will not know you have paid, you will not get your new Membership Card and your payment may be treated as a donation! To avoid this situation please email Dara (address below) as soon as you have paid to confirm payment.

If you have any questions or problems please email the Membership Secretary at dara@godivala.com

PS You can also go into any branch and pay using the same details but remember to add your Spokes Membership Number in the Payee Reference!!

Cycling Trip to Holland – Pam Mann

Last April my sister, Sue, and I went on a 12 day cycling trip to Holland. Although we have done a number of long distance cycling trips in the past, this was the first one since Sue had leukaemia in 2012-2013. For this reason we decided to go to Holland, where the cycling would not be physically too demanding (although the wind can be quite troublesome!).

We took the overnight ferry from Harwich to the Hook of Holland and from the Hook cycled north on the LF1, one of Holland's long distance cycle routes, to visit the bulb fields around Leiden. We were a little early to see the bulb fields at their best, but the cycle route up the coast was a joy – broad, smooth and largely traffic-free.



We were also delighted to discover the Dutch system of Knooppunten, which number the points along the main cycle routes. Every junction had a number and a board with a map (as shown in the photo) and all the routes with the numbers, plus the distances, were marked on the paper maps, which we were carrying, making it very easy to navigate.

Another useful discovery was the organisation Vrienden op de Fiets (Friends of Cyclists), whereby people offer B&B for a very reasonable price to cyclists and walkers. This worked out extremely well and we thoroughly enjoyed getting to know Dutch people in their own homes.

After a night in Leiden we cycled south east to Gouda, where we visited the famous cheese market. From there we went on to Oudewater, where one can see the oldest inhabited



storks' nest on the Town Hall, and after a very pleasant ride through the countryside fresh with Spring flowers and trees in blossom, we arrived at Utrecht.

Although Utrecht is a large town, it was not difficult to find our way through it: the ‘knooppunten’ were still well in evidence, there were cycle paths everywhere and of course there were plenty of cyclists! The following day we had a beautiful, tranquil ride along the dyke protecting villages from the flooding of the Rhine.

As we reached Amerongen the landscape got a bit more hilly. The cycle track



was rougher than we had encountered hitherto, but had a firm base and could be used throughout the year. The next day we visited the Kröller-Müller Museum in the Hoge Veluwe National Park, which houses an impressive collection of Van Gogh paintings. It was a pity that the weather was very wet that day, as the ride through the park would have been beautiful. Also I had the first of

3 punctures that day – never pleasant repairing them in the rain!

After Arnhem we turned south and after crossing the Rhine and the Waal, came to Nijmegen. The following day we reached the furthest point of our trip, not far from the German border near Venlo. From there we made our way back westwards, skirting Eindhoven and spending the night at Den Bosch with its magnificent cathedral and beautiful late-gothic stained glass windows.

The next day we had a lovely ride along the River Waal, past castles and picturesque villages, until we came to Kinderdijk, a Unesco World Heritage site, which has 19 windmills of various types, dating mainly from the 18th century.



Our last day of cycling was to Delft, where we visited the Vermeer Centre and the Delfste Pauw Porcelain factory, as well as the lovely old town. That evening we cycled the 20kms back to the Hook and caught the night ferry back home.

Pam`s Trip to Holland -- Continued

We covered almost 700 kms in the 10 days of cycling and did not cease to marvel at the wonderful Dutch cycling infrastructure. Everywhere cyclists are well-catered for, so there are bridges and tunnels for cyclists only, ferries for cyclists and pedestrians, roundabouts designed to keep cyclists safe and everywhere proper cycle paths separate from the main carriageway, or on the carriageway on quieter roads, but not hugging the gutter!

It was a thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding trip, with gentle but varied landscapes, neat, tidy villages, atmospheric windmills and canals, and fresh meadows and woods. Do go and see for yourselves what it is like cycling in paradise!

Pam

Spokes Christmas Lunch

The Spokes festive meal will be on Sunday 10 January 2016 at 12.30pm at the Blue Check restaurant in Bushey High Street. It is the same venue as last year and proved very popular. There will be a choice of menu on the day.

To book a place please contact Linden on 01923 460466 or e-mail mail@lindensharpe.com

An evening at the Pump House with Rance's Rockin' Chair Band

This is a chance to meet other Spokes members at a local venue to listen to a popular trad jazz band, chat in the intervals, and enjoy real ale or a choice of reasonably priced drinks at the bar. It takes place at 8.15pm on Thursday 17 December in the Colne River Room at The Pump House Arts Centre, Local Board Road, Watford. Tickets are £10.

For further information contact Diana Ivory on 01923 221955.



No it's not me, the legs aren't hairy enough and I used to suck my right thumb – Ed!!



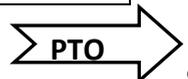
Another photo from Roger B's Happy Harpenden Ride



Join Spokes today
Only £10 per annum
£2 for each additional family
member at the same address

You will receive regular details of our cycle rides, social events and other activities. You will also be helping us campaign for improved cycling conditions in the South West Herts area. When joining you agree to become a member of SPOKES on-line Forum and Cyclescape, unless you opt out by ticking the spaces below.

Title		First Name	
Surname			
Address			
Post Code			
Telephone		Mobile	
Member Email			
Second Family Member Name			
Second Member Email			
Other Family Members' Names			
Amount £		Opt out of Forum	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donation £		Opt out of Cyclescape	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total £			
Signature		Date	



Please also indicate below if you would like to contribute to the following SPOKES activities:

Publicity <input type="checkbox"/>	Campaigning <input type="checkbox"/>
Assisting at Events <input type="checkbox"/>	Leading Rides <input type="checkbox"/>

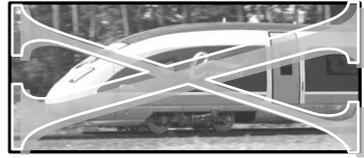
Please make cheques payable to SPOKES and send to:

Dara Godivala 6 Highland Road,
Northwood. HA6 1JT

You will receive a Membership Pack, including a SPOKES Membership Card, entitling you to discounts of 10% on repairs and spares at these locations:

<p>CycloPedia 70-78 Merton Road, Watford, WD18 0WY 01923 221901 www.cycleopediawatford.co.uk shop@cycleopediawatford.co.uk</p>	<p>The Bike Shop 66 Queens Road Watford, WD17 2LA 07941 800029 thebikeshop66@outlook.com</p>
<p>Cycles UK 484/486 St. Albans Road Watford, WD24 6QU 01923 243707 www.cyclesuk.com watford@cyclesuk.com</p>	<p>Northwood Cycle Depot 118 Pinner Road Northwood , HA6 1BP 01923 824174 www.northwoodcycles.com northwoodcycles@tiscali.co.uk</p>
<p>Watford Cycle Hub Holywell Community Centre Tolpits Lane, Watford WD18 9QD 01923 223994 www.watfordcyclehub.org.uk</p>	<p>Café in the Park Rickmansworth Aquadrome, Frogmore Ln. WD3 1NB 08456 800835 10% discount, meals and drinks</p>

Zero Stars for Eurostar



On November 1st 2015 Eurostar's policy on cycle carriage changed again for the worse.

Cyclists previously could take a complete bicycle on board for a £30 fee.

However, citing a lack of space, cyclists have now become third-class passengers in the eyes of Eurostar, and no longer will it be possible to take a complete cycle on Eurostar services.

This is extremely disappointing, especially as the current system is already far from ideal – it's complicated to book, expensive and not promoted. Moreover, the proposed changes will make cycle-rail integration even more difficult, especially for the new cyclist or those who use their cycle as a mobility aid.

It is a massive step backwards for a company that claims always to be “*at the cutting edge of innovation in our industry*” and a supporter of sustainable travel through the Ashden Awards. It also begs the question, what next – a full ban of cyclists and their wheels?

Cyclists should be treated equally. We understand that there is a limited space for baggage on the trains, but it should be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.

CTC is spearheading a Europe-wide campaign to get Eurostar to change its mind. They urge everyone to go onto the CTC website www.ctc.org.uk and send an email or better still an editable letter to Eurostar's CEO Nicolas Petrovic, calling for a reversal of the policy.

STOP PRESS!!! CTC CAMPAIGN WIN: EUROSTAR

BACKPEDALS ON BIKE POLICY

After a concerted campaign by CTC, which galvanised support from leading politicians on both sides of the Channel, including the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson and the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, Eurostar announced on November 17th that it had backed down over its controversial plans to make cyclists box up their bikes and that cyclists would continue to be able to take their fully-assembled bikes on Eurostar, subject to the availability of space. This is a great result and shows what can be achieved with a vigorous campaign.

till an editable letter to Eurostar's CEO Nicolas Petrovic, calling for a reversal of the policy.

Spokes Rides & Events

Remember to bring: water, spare inner tube, lights, reflective and 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.

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

Ride Speed Guide

Slow ----- Gentle pace up to 8 mph

Medium --- Average pace of 9 to 11 mph

Fast ----- Faster than 12 mph

December

**Tuesday 8th 10am Tuesday Morning Ride Harvester, Two Bridges.
WD3 3RX**

An on-road ride to the Cafe at Denham Aerodrome

18 miles

Medium

Roger 01923 720143

Thursday 10th 8pm Social Evening `Moon Under Water

A social evening to discuss cycling issues with a drink & Weatherspoon curry.

Diana 01923 221955

Saturday 12th 9.30am Saturday Morning Ride Watford Junction Station

A morning ride to visit the magnificent Cathedral at St Albans which is free to visit to explore the nooks and crannies and with a cafeteria inside. We will use quiet roads and cycle tracks at a medium pace

18 miles

Medium

Chris 07982 247096

December --- continued

Sunday 13th 10 am Sunday Morning Ride Watford Met Stn

Lunch at Brown Sugar Cafe, Chesham

35 miles

Fast

Clive Jones

Monday 28th 10am Winter sales!... I'd rather be riding!!! Watford Cycle Hub

On road ride at strong medium pace to burn off some Christmas excesses.

Probably out towards Chesham on lanes and smaller roads. Pub stop towards the end of the ride.

25 miles

Strong 12mph

Steve 07973 305152

January

Sunday 3rd 10am Winter warmer to Flaunden Watford Met Station

Out into the Chilterns mainly on quiet lanes to Flaunden. All on road and a medium pace to keep warm. Pub stop at Sarratt on the return.

18 miles

Medium

Pam 01494 723024 On day 07922458196

Thursday 7th 10am Thursday Ride Watford Met Station

Lunch at Ruislip Lido Cafe.

25 miles

Medium

Clive

Thursday 7th 8pm Social Evening Moon Under Water

A social evening to discuss cycling issues with a drink & Weatherspoon curry.

Diana 01923 221955

Sunday 10th 12.30pm Festive Meal Blue Cheque Restaurant

Linden 01923 460466

Thursday 14th 10am Ride to Denham Morrisons Croxley

Ride along Ebury Way - Aquadrome - cafe in Denham Country Park.

20 miles

Medium

Dennis 01923 463898

January --- continued

Saturday 23rd 10am **Ride to St Albans** **Morrisons Croxley**
Ride through Chiswell Green and How Green.
19 miles Medium Dennis 01923 463898

Thursday 28th 10am **A Blue Book Ride – 18** **New Road**
(off Lower High St)
A Blue Book Ride this time to Elstree (coffee time), Colney St and Bricket Wood.
This ride may change depending on weather as there is a bit of bridleway riding.
16 miles Medium Roger R 07952449473

February

Monday 1st 7.30pm **Space for Cycling in SW Herts**
The Moon Under Water, 44 High Street, Watford, WD17 2BS.
A meeting for you (if you want to campaign for more cycling in SW Herts: Three Rivers District, Watford Borough, and Bushey).
Peter Loader 07910 694 832

Saturday 6th 10am **Elstree Aerodrome** **Pump House**
Ride through Wall Hall and Batlers Green
17 miles Medium Dennis 01923 463898

Thursday 11th 8pm **Social Evening Moon Under Water**
A social evening to discuss cycling issues with a drink & Weatherspoon curry.
Diana 01923 221955

Tuesday 16th 10am **Best Lanes in SW Herts** **Harvester Croxley**
Ride through Flaunden, Bovingdon and Chipperfield.
22 miles Medium Dennis 01923 463898

Saturday 20th 10am **Saturday Morning Ride** **Watford Cycle Hub**
A ride on lanes into the Chilterns. Coffee stop on the ride back.
20 miles Medium Roger 01923 720143



Spokes is the local cycle club for South West Hertfordshire, formed to encourage cycling by organizing rides and campaigning for better and safer cycling routes.



*Roger`s ride on Tuesday 10th November
By the Grand Union Canal.*

Seven cyclists on an enjoyable ride -before reaching the hills!

Come on, get on your bike and join us!

If you want to join us on a ride, then just turn up at the stated start point. Have a look at the up and coming rides. We have rides most weekends, some weekdays and summer evenings. They start at several places around Watford, like the Harvester in Croxley, Morrisons or Watford Cycle Hub.

Our riders come from Watford, Bushey, Garston, Oxhey, Rickmansworth, Croxley, Chandlers Cross, Pinner and other areas in South West Hertfordshire

Visit our web site to catch the latest news and information:

www.spokesgroup.org.uk



New winter opening hours Effective 1st November

Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	9:00 - 5:00
Wednesday	9:00 - 5:30
Thursday	10:00 - 5:30
Friday	9:00 - 5:00
Saturday	9:00 - 5:00
Sunday	9:30 - 3.30

Who We Are and What We Do

Qualified - Bicycle Mechanics, Ride Leaders and Coaches

- Service and Repair bikes
- Can instruct you to repair your bikes
- Help you service your bikes
- Sell new and reconditioned parts and accessories (10% discount for Spokes members)
- Have bikes for hire
- Teach you how to ride or help develop your confidence whilst riding
- Organise and lead regular rides

Regular events

Go Ride Club every Friday 5.30 – 7pm for those aged 6-16

Recondition donated bikes every Tuesday evening 6 – 8.30pm

Volunteers Day - last Thursday of each month though, December date is 17th

Buying someone a new boxed bike for Christmas?

Get it delivered to our workshop and let us assemble it for you OR let us check your self-assembly before you ride!

We love all things cycling and if we can't help directly ourselves we'll signpost or introduce you to a person who can!! With a wealth of local cycling knowledge so it's worth contacting us!