



SPRING 2016

www.spokesgroup.org.uk



Steve`s strong ride towards Chesham on the 28th December in an attempt to fight off the Christmas excesses.....Self defeating with a pub stop at the end !!!



Chris's ride to St Albans Cathedral on Saturday 12th December



*The entrance to the old
Gorehambury House
once lived in by Francis
Bacon.*

*I wonder if he thought it
amusing shouting to the
servants for a bacon
sandwich*

Chairman's Chat – Roger Bangs

Winter Rides

It's amazing how many cyclists have turned up for our winter rides. Was it due to the weather !! Or is it just the random nature of the rides and the weather, or maybe it was due to the better publicity we have been receiving.

The rides are published on the website and in the newsletter. For the last year or more the rides have also been on the GoSky Website and Facebook and both have attracted new riders.

For over a year we have wanted to promote spontaneous rides i.e. arranged at short notice. We have not mastered it yet, but if you wish to lead a ride and can give a week's notice, send the details to me. I will put it onto the website's calendar.

What we really need is a new **Rides Organiser**, who can take over this role. We have ideas for getting the spontaneous rides known to more people. Is this a role you could take on?

Organisation

The AGM will be on Monday 18 April at 7.30 at the Cycle Hub. I hope to see you there. Apart from meeting others and discussing cycling issues, we would like a few more people to be involved in running our activities. We particularly need a person to manage our website, which now uses Wordpress. If you are interested, please talk to me or another committee person.

Membership

We have changed the way membership information is kept. The renewal date has changed for some members, which has caused a little confusion, but should be resolved in the coming months. Members can now renew by cheque or bank transfer for one or three years. We still need the current email address for all members, which will enable more effective communication on an occasional basis.

Campaigning for better cycling routes

You may be aware that the Hospital Link and Access road is now being built.

The Link road is the first section from Dalton Way to Wiggshall Road. The National Cycle Route will cross this road at the Dalton Way Junction on an uncontrolled crossing with a central triangular island. I hope there will be good sight lines here, enabling motorists and cyclists to see each other, as there may be fast flowing traffic.

The Access Road goes from Wiggshall Road to a mini roundabout that will give access to the hospital car park. There will be a 3 meter wide shared use path along the south side of this road. From the mini roundabout the road will continue to another mini roundabout at Willow Lane for blue light vehicles only. This road will also have a shared use path, allowing cyclists to join at Willow Lane.

We are still waiting to hear the results of the consultations on extending the cycle route in Watford's Lower High St., although the work appears to be starting in February. We would also like to know the result of last year's consultation for the cycle route on the St Albans Road, north of the Dome Roundabout.

A recent issue is the planned changes to what is termed the "Town Hall Square" between the Town Hall and Library. There is concern that the continuous cycle route is maintained and not misused, as the free-flow High St. has been with market stalls.

Two new secondary schools are likely to be built at Croxley and Mill End. Safe cycle routes need to be established to both sites, by extending existing shared use paths and allowing good quality cycle routes to be created, often on shorter routes, by passing through existing green spaces. Historically cycling was discouraged on sports fields and play areas, but these are the areas where cycling should be allowed and encouraged.

Spokes (SW Herts Cycling Group) AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 18th April 2016 at the Watford Cycle Hub, Pavilion 2 (Small Pavilion) Holywell Community Centre, Chaffinch Lane, (Off Tolpits Lane) WD18 9QD.

Items for A.O.B. - Please notify the Chair at least one week before the meeting.

A Fast Ride to Chesham and Beyond – Clive Jones



They look too happy, Clive, it must have been too easy!!!

I deliberately had this ride billed as fast and consciously risked a low turnout “Perhaps I’ll be by myself today” was the phrase that lingered in my mind, as I approached the Watford Met Station meet. I was delighted to see the small but hale and hearty group, consisting of Bob, David, Chris and Samir that had turned up on this exceptionally dull December day.

The advantage of the meet location was that you can be out in the lanes within a few minutes. The disadvantage was that we had to use Rousebarn Lane. It’s such an innocuous looking lane, almost idyllic for cyclists, as it is a no through road for motor vehicles and, therefore, very quiet. Here comes the but - it is terribly neglected, having two lengthy stretches of flooding, as well as years of leaves/debris build-up and some nasty potholes. The highway authority have been contacted, but don’t hold your breath. In fact the inclusion of this lane in the route was the only point in the day where the leader’s judgement was seriously questioned! Perhaps Sarratt Lane would have been better, certainly less muddy!

I won't dwell on the detail of the itinerary to Chesham (our lunch stop), as it was highly unoriginal, but direct and traffic free. Indeed, the only real traffic of the morning was on the steep descent of White Hill into Chesham town centre. By this stage it was only mid-day, giving us ample time for food and chat in the Brown Sugar Cafe, where Naz's brisk service meant that we were decidedly "en avance". After lunch, while the bikes were being unchained, the idea of putting an extra loop in was floated and readily accepted. I mentioned there would be a steep climb, but everyone seemed happy with the idea of a little exertion. So we struck out north westwards towards Bellingdon with the turn coming at Cholesbury. Here, in thickening fog, and the leaves of the hedgerow dripping with moisture, we swung south eastwards and onto the favourite gradients of Chesham Vale.

Yes, we could have had another look at Chesham, but in view of the limited daylight, Hertfordshire beckoned. We re-entered it by the Rossway Estate and kept "on the top", thereby avoiding Berkhamstead (though not all of its traffic). As we approached the steep hairpin on the lane just outside Whelpley Hill, I reassured the group that it was the last big hill of the day. They all cycled it, I think. The rest of the return was like the outward leg, direct and brisk. Chipperfield was a bit of a blur, as we weren't hanging around on the long downhill to the junction with Old House Lane. It was by the canal and Cassiobury Park, where we went our separate ways, with perhaps another 45 minutes left of cycleable daylight.

Thanks everyone for your company - we did 40ish miles on a day when it would have been very easy to have stayed indoors.

Spokes and British Cycling – Pam Mann

Many of you will be aware that Spokes is affiliated to British Cycling, (as well as the CTC and Cyclenation). Some have expressed surprise at this, as British Cycling is seen to be an organisation focussed on racing and competitive cycling, whereas Spokes has a different set of aims and ethos.

We thought it might be helpful to explain why we are affiliated to British Cycling and to set out the benefits of this affiliation, which costs us £70.00 per year. The main reason we took out the affiliation in the first place was because the Public Liability Insurance offered by British Cycling was better than that offered elsewhere, particularly with regard to non-members joining rides.

We have subsequently found that there are other benefits of affiliation, notably the Club Management Tool, which is an online resource developed by British Cycling to help with the day to day running of the club. It includes the following features:

- Online Subscription Collection – this will allow members to pay subscriptions using British Cycling’s secure web payment system, with the money paid directly into the club’s bank account.
- Membership Manager – this makes it easy to manage membership and communicate with club members.
- Website Manager – this is a free and easy tool to create and manage the club website.

At the moment we are only in the early stages of using the Club Management Tool, but we will keep you updated on progress over the coming months.

An additional benefit of British Cycling Affiliation for individual members of Spokes is that you can get up to £21.00 off membership, when you join British Cycling for the first time. For example, Ride membership for anyone over the age of 19 would be £16.50 instead of £33.00 and Race Bronze membership would be free! For further details see britishcycling.org.uk/membership.

Membership (A reminder from the Winter Newsletter)

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!!



The poster features logos for DENS (Action Against Homelessness), Dacorum Borough Council, and British Cycling. It includes an illustration of three cyclists. The text reads: 'The Hemel Hillbuster', 'Sunday 24th April 2016', 'Cycle to support local people in crisis', 'Choice of 100km, 60km and 25km routes', and 'SIGNUPS NOW OPEN'.

Please see info on an exciting new sportive for Hemel Hempstead this April (24th). The Hemel Hillbuster takes you on a choice of three routes over challenging Chiltern Hills and through beautiful countryside and villages around Dacorum. The event starts and finishes in the iconic Gadebridge Park, finishing place of 2014 Men's Tour of Britain and last year's Women's Tour of Britain.

DENS is organising the event, and all proceeds will enable us to continue providing support to homeless and vulnerable people in Dacorum. The route will be fully signed and marshalled and there will be a support vehicle, food stations and first aid.

http://www.dens.org.uk/events/the_hemel_hillbuster_e11.html

Please see link above. Entries for the 3 rides 100km, 60km and 25km are now open on the British Cycling website.



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 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>

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

March

Thursday 3rd 8.00pm Social Evening Moon Under Water, Watford High St.

A social evening to discuss cycling issues with a drink and Wetherspoon curry.

Diana 01923 221955

Saturday 5th 9.30am Gorhambury & St Albans Watford Junction Station

A steady ride to St Albans, via Potters Crouch, through the Gorhambury Estate and entering the city from the north with a break at McDonalds, will suit hybrid / mountain bikes at a steady pace.

Medium 10mph 25 miles Chris 07982 247096 or 01923 462783

Tuesday 8th 10.00am Morning Ride Harvester, Two Bridges. WD3 3RX

In the Chilterns, mainly on road, calling in for refreshment at Blackwalls Cafe on the return

Medium 10mph 18 miles Roger 01923 720143

Sunday 13th 10.30am Superhighway Checkout in London

Train journey to start, details to be advised to interested parties - see contact details. With all the work done by the Mayor of London and his team to make cycling safer in London, this is a chance to try out one or two of the Superhighways and other roads in Central London on a quieter day and to enjoy some of the sights.

Slow 8mph 16 miles David If interested, please call 020-8429 2882 by Thursday 10th

Thursday 17th 10.00am Thursday Morning Ride Watford Underground Stn

Ride along quiet roads and lanes to Bedmond. (a few hills and may be muddy in places!)

Medium 10 mph 16 miles Nigel 07760 478271

Saturday 26th 10.00am Day ride Pump House, Watford. WD17 2JP

A ride on good tracks and roads via Shenley to the Great North Way and Hatfield, then pub lunch at Sleapshyde. Return along the Alban way and NCR.

Medium 10mph 33 miles Roger 01923 720143

April

Tuesday 5th 10.00am Morning Ride Harvester, Two Bridges. WD3 3RX

Mainly on-road ride to the Cafe at Denham Aerodrome via Chorleywood

Medium 10mph 20 miles Roger 01923 720143

Thursday 7th 8.00pm Social Evening Moon Under Water, Watford High Street

A social evening to discuss cycling issues with a drink and Wetherspoon curry.

Diana 01923 221955

Sunday 10th 10.00am Chiltern Ride Watford Met Station

A ride out into the Chilterns to Ley Hill, via Chipperfield and Bovington. Back via Chenies and Sarratt. Almost all on road, with a few hills, but lovely countryside to compensate. Pub stop at The Boot in Sarratt on the return.

Medium 10mph 22 miles Pam 01494 723024

Thursday 14th 10.00am Thursday morning ride Watford High Street Station

Ride through the green belt to the east of Watford. (bring a drink/snack as there is no cafe stop!)

Medium 10mph 17miles Nigel 07760 478271

Sunday 17th 10.00am A Murderous Ride Garston Med Ctr WD25 9GP

Charles takes you to the site of the murder of James Grainge at Rabley near Shenley on the night of 31st December 1823 / 1st January 1824 and tells you the sad story of how he died. Lunch at Shenley.

Medium 10mph 26 miles Charles 0208 4555174 or on the day 07961 194771

Monday 18th 7.30pm AGM Watford Cycle Hub, WD18 9QD

Open meeting to help decide SPOKES future.

Thursday 21st 10.00am Leafy Lanes to Latimer and Beyond Watford Cycle Hub, WD18 9QD

A lovely 26 mile ride through quiet tree lined lanes with some hills! We'll ride through the lovely villages of Loudwater, Sarratt, Flaunden, Latimer, Leyhill, Bovingdon Green and Chipperfield with a stop at Blackwells. Suitable for any bike.

Medium 10 mph 26 miles Brian 07400 772113

Saturday 23rd 2.00pm Bluebell ride Cha Cha Cha Cafe, Cassiobury Park

A short ride through the bluebell woods, stopping off for a cream tea!

Slow 6 miles Nigel 07760 478271

May

Sunday 1st 6.00am Traditional May Day Meet Bottom of Cassiobury Park by the bridge.

One for the early birds! For several years we have met to enjoy seeing the Morris Dancers perform at their Annual gathering to celebrate May Day. Dancing will be from 5.30 to 6.30 a.m. Optional ride to a Cafe breakfast afterwards, for those who wish. Volunteer needed.

Monday 9th 7.30pm Space for Cycling in SW Herts Meeting in 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, or Bushey. Peter 07910 694 832

Thursday 12th 10.00am Thursday Morning Ride Watford High Street Stn

On bridleways (may be uneven and muddy) and quiet roads along the river Colne. (bring a drink/snack as there is no cafe stop!)

Medium 10mph 15miles Nigel 07760 478271

Thursday 12th 8.00pm Social Evening Moon Under Water, Watford High Street

A social evening to discuss cycling issues with a drink and Wetherspoon curry. Diana 01923 221955

Thursday 19th 10.00am Wendover Woods Watford Cycle Hub, WD18 9QD

A great Chilterns ride to Wendover. Fantastic views, lovely quiet lanes and roads and lunch at the Cafe in the Woods. For the most part the gradient is gradual, but there are a few hills that will get your pulse racing. You can take your time on the hills. Suitable for any bike.

Medium 10 mph 46miles Brian 07400 772113

Friday 20th 7.00pm Evening ride Watford Cycle Hub, WD18 9QD

Off road ride along the Ebury Way and canal path to Black Jacks Mill passing though the Aquadrome

Slow 15miles Roger 01923 720143

Saturday 21st 10.00am Wembley Cup Final Experience Bushey Station

Annual FA inspired trip to enjoy the quiet paths and lanes around Wembley long before the match starts. Includes a trip up Wembley Way and a stop for a late breakfast at the famous Ace Cafe. Scenic return aided by canal towpath, the River Brent and other off road sections.

Slow 25 miles David 020-8429 2882 or on the day 07745 018288

Saturday and Sunday 21st and 22nd Ricky Festival Aquadrome

Come and help at the SPOKES stall. Giving cycling information to the public.

Roger 01923 720143



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

Buying someone a new boxed bike?

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!



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.



Charles` ride to Gorehambury and St Albans

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