



## SUMMER 2016 - No 89

[www.spokesgroup.org.uk](http://www.spokesgroup.org.uk)

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Spokes-Group-South-West-Hertfordshire/131301626965607>



*The Old Village Lock Up Gaol at Shenley on Charles` Murderous Ride on April 17th*

*David Turners Superhighway Ride 13th March*



*The Slide at the Olympic Village- more pics page 5*

# **Chairman's Chat – Roger Bangs**

## **Organisation**

The AGM was held on Monday 18 April at the Cycle Hub with sixteen members attending. We have around 120 lead members & 45 second family members. These numbers are fairly static, we do find it difficult to get more members involved in managing SPOKES. Fortunately two members offered on a provisional basis to take over the important roles of managing the web-site & co-ordinating the rides.

SPOKES was formed twenty years ago to promote cycling in South West Hertfordshire by organising rides & influencing the local authorities to provide better cycling routes. SPOKES has continued to do this but some of the early zeal has faded, we often have reasonable numbers joining our rides but find it more difficult attracting members to organise & campaign for better cycling facilities.

Like many organisations SPOKES is bound to change, we are likely to communicate more by email giving up to date information about rides & other issues, but it all depends on members organising & supporting our activities.

## **Membership**

Over the last year Dara has been rationalising our membership records, getting four common renewal dates matching with the Newsletter dates & getting current email address for all members including second family members.

## **Campaigning for better cycling routes**

Most cyclists are aware of the Hospital Link & Access road is now being built. Members are concerned about the future Wighenhall Road crossing, suggesting this should be moved to south side of the bridge and become a Toucan Crossing. The Lower High St. contra-flow cycle lane is complete allowing cycling the full length of the High Street.

Major changes are taking place in Cassiobury Park where we look forward to the cycle routes being extended to the bridges over the canal and river.

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 & not misused as the free-flow High Street has been with market stalls.

## **Riding the Bike**

Summer is a good time to be out cycling, enjoying the fresh air & county lanes, so do support the rides organised locally.

As it is our 20 anniversary join one of the easy celebration rides, mix with others and talk about what needs to be done to improve cycling.

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*The New Hunton Bridge Steps*

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## 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](mailto: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!!

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*Outside Aldgate Station*



*Outside the Velodrome*



*I know it`s not a bicycle but it is two wheels and I thought it was funny – Ed!!*



*Pam`s Chiltern Ride on 10th April*

## Thirty years of cycling – Clive Jones

In thinking about what to write for this article, it occurs to me how the experience of cycling differs from person to person. What cycling brings to any one of us cannot be neatly summed up. So for these few lines, I'll speak from my personal point of view. So here are a few thoughts.

I started my cycling in the family's back garden at the age of about six years old and soon reckoned that I was quite good at it! Not yet in my teens, I would go on impromptu excursions round my native London Borough of Brent. These trips took in some pretty unsuitable locations for a novice such as Staples Corner, the Edgware Road and Cricklewood Broadway. As I got older, cycling became a fixture in my life, and with the YHA providing overnight accommodation, horizons were pushed a lot further. By my late teens, I was cycling into the Chilterns most weekends. Then going on Youth Hostelling trips, first to Inglesham (near Swindon), then to Badby (Northants), Thurlby (Lincs) and a succession of trips to the Peak District. On one Peaks tour, I rode back from Ilam Hall hostel in a day, about 130 miles. These days, my cycling is more utilitarian: hauling heavy shopping, getting to clients or meetings. No-one can deny a bike's supreme usefulness, economy and green credentials.

There have been occasions when things have gone wrong like getting 'the bonk' (ie being completely out of energy). In Oxfordshire a while back, I was forced to walk the slightest rise in the road and raid my pannier for anything edible just to keep going (dry muesli was all I could find). As for the high points, there are many such as my first all-night ride, which got me to Doncaster (then a train to Scotland). I remember the bike purring along deserted Lincolnshire lanes in the hours before dawn. It was very cold with the road surface damp with dew.

A few of my bikes - and I've had far more than was strictly needed (!) – stand out in my memory, either for the right or the wrong reasons. One was a 1980s 'Falcon' touring bike, so striking in its pearlescent white, with slate-blue lettering proclaiming 'Falcon' running down the seat tube. It had a beautiful red, blue and gold head tube badge, reminiscent of Raleigh's heron but bigger and shinier. In winter, the treasured Falcon was kitted-out with wide mudguards and a 'Carradice' saddle bag, its water-bottle carrier often holding a Thermos flask. Its down-tube became quite tea-stained. In summer, *sans* mudguards and fitted with racing wheels, the Falcon made a passable time-trialling bike, its pearl finish contrasting with the greys or black finishes of the modern bikes of other competitors. It wasn't strictly a 'lightweight' machine, but it very sure-footed;

a leisure to ride. And then the bike was gone; I left it with my back turned for a few minutes, stupidly without bothering to lock it up...

And the bikes which are memorable for the wrong reasons? Well, there was one, a huge black-painted second-hand 'Puch' tourer which I rode a few summers ago from Calais with the aim of 'getting as far east as possible'. After a pleasant few days in northern France, the ride across the rolling plains of Champagne was blazing hot. Nights were spent in the cool of two-star family-run hotels at Laon and Rheims and a charming little 'camping municipal' at Sainte Menehould (just 3,50 euros per night). The campsite at Mulhouse was pleasantly shaded but damp. Full of slugs in fact! Quite a few got into the tent! But the real 'fun' was to start when the Puch and I were faced with some serious climbing: we had to get over the looming mass of the Vosges. On the climb up the 'Grand Ballon', I noticed that the bike frame was no longer in one piece: one of the seat stays had parted company from the chain stay and was rubbing against the smallest sprocket! I was lucky to find a tourist information office open in nearby Cernay where I had to explain to the lady that a bike shop was *not* what I needed. What I *did* need was someone – anyone - who was good with a brazing torch... Despite its being August, and the period of the 'grandes vacances' with half of France sunning itself around the Mediterranean, we found an artisan gate-maker. He couldn't do the job straight away so I had to spend a few days in Cernay, a sweet little place best known for its colony of storks. On the day of the repair, I looked on nervously from the corner of his workshop as he went about the job. He did a neat repair for 40 euros and so the tour could carry on.

Safely over the Rhine and into Germany, I followed the magnificent Danube Cycleway for a couple of hundred kilometres. On an almost imperceptible downhill gradient, passing into Austria and its Baroque onion-dome churches on the way, the Danube Cycleway or 'Donauradweg' proved to be the easiest, and also some of the most uneventful cycling of my life! By the time Vienna was reached, I was starting to tire of the trip; the heat, and nearly 800 km with camping equipment had put both me and the bike to the test. Wild ideas of getting to the Black Sea were abandoned. Somehow, the thought of cycling in Herts again became more attractive than central Europe. I am not a fan of short flights, but booked me and the bike on a flight to Heathrow. A three week cycling itinerary was retraced in less than three hours. But I still hope to finish that trip one day, though not on the Puch which was stripped of useable components and scrapped within days of my return to Watford !

Well, these are a few of my cycling memories. I would love to read of other Spokes members' cycling reminiscences.

## **Campaigning on Cyclescape — Peter Loader**

We have a group of campaigners using the Cyclescape website for publishing/discussing issues, news, and events in SW Herts.

Below are some of the latest .news headlines and events. For future updates, sign up with Cyclescape at <http://blog.cyclescape.org/guide/> and then follow the thread(s) in which you are interested.

### *Campaign News Headlines*

#### **At last, Rousebarn Lane, Croxley Green may be fixed**

See (or follow) <http://spokesswherts.cyclescape.org/threads/2524> for details.

### *Campaign Events*

#### **New Secondary School in Mill End, Rickmansworth: Public Exhibition of Proposals**

**When:** Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> May, 2016 15:00 - 19:00, and  
Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2016 11:00 - 15:00.

**Where:** Mill End Community Centre, at the junction of Church Lane and Berry Lane, Mill End, Rickmansworth, WD3 8HD.

The exhibition will be over when you read this, but see (or follow) <http://spokesswherts.cyclescape.org/threads/2546> for details of what is happening about it.

#### **July 2016 Meeting: Space for Cycling in SW Herts**

**When:** 19:30 on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July, 2016

**Where:** In one of the alcoves (on the right) at the back of The Moon Under Water, 44 High Street, Watford, WD17 2BS.

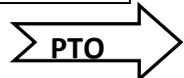
See (or follow) <http://spokesswherts.cyclescape.org/threads/2552> for details of the agenda, etc.



**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"/>
<sup>1</sup> Get Newsletter by email <input type="checkbox"/>	<sup>1</sup> Get Newsletter by post <input type="checkbox"/>

<sup>1</sup> To help in reducing Spokes expenditure

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

# Spokes Rides and Events Programme

As well as the list of rides in this newsletter, Spokes' rides are published on the following web sites:

- Spokes - [www.spokesgroup.org.uk](http://www.spokesgroup.org.uk)
- Sky Ride - [www.goskyride.com](http://www.goskyride.com) - we are the SPOKES – Watford group
- Facebook - [www.facebook.com/www.spokesgroup.org.uk](http://www.facebook.com/www.spokesgroup.org.uk) - like our page

Information about any rides that are added or changed will be emailed to those in the group who have provided email addresses (and you can opt out of receiving ride information) and posted on the Spokes web, Sky Ride and Facebook.

## **NEW ---- Spokes Buddy Rides**

If you've wanted to get out on your bike when there is no ride in the Spokes calendar or at short notice when the weather is looking good or you've some spare time, you can now let other Spokes' members know of your planned ride and hopefully you'll have some company.

Email [rides@spokesgroup.org.uk](mailto:rides@spokesgroup.org.uk) or ring Brian on 01442 832588 with the details of your ride. These will be emailed to Spokes' members and posted on the Spokes' web pages. Please provide

- Contact details, so that participants can contact you about the ride and on the day
- Start location
- Approximate distance
- Where you will be riding, including whether the route is particularly hilly or flat
- Information that will allow potential riders to decide whether the ride is suitable for them or not:
- Type of ride and bike advised (on road, off-road, suitable for mountain bike, road bike or any)
- Pace (slow 8mph, medium 10mph, fast 12mph)

## **Remember to Bring**

Water and snack; spare inner tube; pump; appropriate clothing for the forecast weather and road conditions – reflective, waterproof and warm; and lights if appropriate

## **Disclaimer**

As a participant of Spokes' rides you must be over 16 unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. Insurance is your responsibility. Spokes cannot accept liability for you or your possessions. Your well being is your responsibility and it is your responsibility to follow the Highway Code at all times. Your participation in the rides is acceptance of these terms.

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

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## **Ride Speed Guide**

**Slow** ----- Gentle up to 8mph

**Medium** ----- Average of 9-11 mph

**Fast** ----- Average over 12 mph

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## ***June***

**Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> 10am**

**Tuesday Morning Ride from Harvester,  
Baldwin Lane WD3 3RX**

Cycle on roads & good tracks to Shenley for refreshment.

18 miles

Medium

Roger 01923 720143

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> 8pm**

**Spokes Social Evening & Curry Night  
Moon Under Water, 44 High St, Watford**

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

Diana 01923 221955

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> 7:30pm**

**Re-ride SPOKES First Ride from 1996  
Harvester, Baldwin Lane WD3 3RX**

A repeat of SPOKES first ride 20 years ago when 70 people turned up. Cycle on road via Rouseburn Lane to the Cart & Horses for an evening celebration drink.

12 miles

Easy

Roger 01923 720143

**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> 10am      Towpath & Woods from Watford Cycle Hub,  
Holywell Community Centre, Tolpits Lane**

Using the Ebury Way and canal towpath we ride to Whippendell Woods. We ride through the woods and after a short stretch of road, pass the Grove. We rejoin the towpath until we enter Cassiobury Park and refreshments in the Cha Cha cafe. Then back to the start. Mainly off-road and suitable for mountain bikes and hybrids.

11 miles

Medium

Brian 01442 832588  
and 07400 772113 on the day

**Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> 6pm      Tornado's Tuesday Evening Ride,  
Watford Cycle Hub, Holywell Community Centre,**

An evening ride at a strong pace. Towpaths and some challenging tracks and lanes, so not suitable for road bikes. Pub stop. Bring lights but aim to be back before dark.

16 – 20 miles

Fast, strong

Steve 07973 305152

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> 10:30am      Colney Caper, Corner of Bushey Mill Lane and  
Radlett Road WD24 4LP**

A lovely off-road ride along the Ver Valley with refreshments at the Green Dragon in London Colney. Slow pace and will suit mountain bikes or hybrid bikes.

10 miles

Easy

Diana 01923 221955

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***July***

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> 10am      Summer Day Ride from Watford Cycle Hub,  
Holywell Community Centre, Tolpits Lane**

A ride on lanes & good cycle tracks via St.Albans, Harpenden & the Nicky Line for lunch at Redbourne. Arrive back in Watford mid afternoon.

36 miles

Medium

Roger 01923 720143

**Monday 4th 7:30pm      Meeting: Space for Cycling in SW Herts  
Moon Under Water, 44 High St, Watford**

A campaigning meeting. We will be meeting in one of the alcoves at the back (on the right). See the Cyclescape website for details: either just look at the thread <http://spokesswherts.cyclescape.org/threads/2552> or, for future updates, sign up with Cyclescape at <http://blog.cyclescape.org/guide/> and follow the thread.

Peter Loader 07910 694 832

**Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> 10am      Tuesday Morning Ride  
Harvester, Baldwin Lane WD3 3RX**

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

18 miles

Medium

Roger 01923 720143

**Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> 10am      Open Air Ride  
from Harvester, Baldwin Lane WD3 3RX**

A ride across and along the Colne Valley with high level views and leafy lanes - to Chorleywood, past the Open Air Museum, down to the River Colne, up to Harefield and back down to the canal and final stretch along the towpath.

Refreshments stop at the Rowan Cafe. Suitable for touring, mountain and hybrid bikes.

19 miles

Medium

Brian 01442 832588  
on the day and 07400 772113

**Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> 6pm      Tarnado's Tuesday Evening Ride  
Watford Cycle Hub, Holywell Community Centre,**

An evening ride at a strong pace. Towpaths and some challenging tracks and lanes, so not suitable for road bikes. Pub stop. Bring lights but aim to be back before dark.

20 miles

Fast, strong

Steve 07973 305152

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> 8pm      Spokes Social Evening & Curry Night  
Moon Under Water, 44 High St, Watford**

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

Diana 01923 221955

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> 2:30pm SPOKES 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday Ride & Picnic Ride,  
Watford Cycle Hub, Holywell Community Centre**

Easy ride along the Ebury Way to the Aquadrome to celebrate 20 years of SPOKES. Please bring a picnic to share - there will be a birthday cake! Email me at pammann@btinternet.com or phone me on 01494 723024 to let me know you are coming. Look forward to seeing you there!

8 miles

Slow

Pam 01494 723024

and 07922 458196 on the day

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> 10am Watford to Aldenham Country Park  
Watford High Street Station WD17 1LU**

A pleasant steady ride along the Ebury way, up through the Wall Hall estate, through Letchworth Heath and quiet roads to Aldenham country park. There are a couple of hills on the way there but it's all downhill on the way back. A nice cuppa awaits you at the cafe in the park. I will put the ride on Sky Ride or you can email me to confirm attendance: lorreinek@gmail.com or text me on 07505130180

20 miles

Medium

Lorraine 07505 130180

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> 9:30am Ride to Dunstable Downs  
Watford Junction Station WD17 1LU**

A ride to Dunstable Down's Visitor Centre, using minor roads through picturesque villages, to enjoy a lovely view and an optional cream tea when we get there! Will be at a steady pace and after the climb to the Down's, the break should be rewarding. Suitable for road bikes.

45 miles

Medium

Chris 01923 462783 or 07982 247096

## *August*

**Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> 6pm      Tarnado's Tuesday Evening Ride, Watford Cycle Hub,  
Holywell Community Centre, Tolpits Lane WD18 9QD**

An evening ride at a strong pace. Towpaths and some challenging tracks and lanes, so not suitable for road bikes. Pub stop. Bring lights but aim to be back before dark.

16 - 20 miles

Fast, strong

Steve 07973 305152

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> 8pm      Spokes Social Evening & Curry Night  
Moon Under Water, 44 High St, Watford**

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

Diana 01923 221955

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> 10am      Tuesday Morning Ride  
Harvester, Baldwin Lane WD3 3RX**

Cycle on lanes & tracks east of Watford.

18 miles

Medium

Roger 01923 720143

**Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> 10am      Swan Bottom, Watford Cycle Hub,  
Holywell Community Centre, Tolpits Lane**

Into the Chilterns via Ashley Green and St Leonards to Swan Bottom and refreshments at the Old Swan. Return via Ballinger, Chesham and Chandlers Cross. Some hills along the easiest ride into the Chilterns. All on-road and suitable for any bike.

41 miles

Medium

Brian 01442 832588  
on the day 07400 772113



Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	9:00 – 5:00
Wednesday	9:00 – 5:00
Thursday	10:00 – 5:30
Friday	9:00 – 5:00
Saturday	9:00 – 5:00
Sunday	9:00 – 4:00

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[office@watfordcyclehub.org.uk](mailto:office@watfordcyclehub.org.uk)

[www.watfordcyclehub.org.uk](http://www.watfordcyclehub.org.uk)

### **We love & do all things cycling:**

- Fix bikes
- Sell fully re-conditioned bikes
- Sell new accessories
- Sell new and recon parts (10% discount for Spokes members)
- Security tag and register bikes
- Teach you about bikes
- Train you to ride bikes & help build confidence
- Guide you on bike rides
- Hire bikes
- Accept your unwanted bikes
- If we can't help direct we'll signpost or introduce you to someone who can!

### **Regular events** *(see the website for details):*

- "Go-Ride" Club every Friday 6-7:30pm for 6 to 16 yrs
- Maintenance Modules – Thursday evenings
- Volunteers Day – last Thursday of the month

### **Summer Kids courses** *(see the website for details):*

- "Learn to Ride"
- "Bikeability"

**Lots of free parking, kids playground and warm welcome guaranteed!**



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.



*Brian`s Wendover Ride – 19<sup>th</sup> May*

## **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](http://www.spokesgroup.org.uk)**