



2023 Summer Newsletter – No. 116



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membership@spokesgroup.org.uk



SPOKES was delighted to support the 10th Anniversary celebrations of the Watford Cycle Hub. A great achievement. And the cake was delicious!



SPOKES is petitioning for improvements to the Water Lane junction where several members have had accidents. See Campaigning in this newsletter for the latest news!



The group on Phillip's Chess Valley Ride looking relaxed after witnessing an accident when a motorist dangerously overtook them. The result was a car that overturned!



Roger's Nickey Line ride turned into a windy adventure.

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Burnham Beeches has been a popular destination on the Spring Rides. This is Roger's group.

Chat from the Chair

Peter Jackson

We have enjoyed a well-supported Spring Rides programme and, thanks to the Members who lead rides, can look forward to a good programme of Summer Rides. You may have noticed that I offered a slow ride to Burnham Beeches to test the demand for longer slow rides than we normally offer. It was well supported so I am offering another one, to Hatfield House, in August.

Members unable to attend our AGM in April missed an interesting and enjoyable evening. Watford Borough Council Officers got us off to a very good start with presentations on their “Wayfinding” and “Watford Green Ring Eastern Loop Virtual Ride Through” projects.

The “Wayfinding” project is for improved and integrated signage and display boards to make it easier for pedestrians to find key Watford destinations.

The “Watford Green Ring Eastern Loop Virtual Ride Through” project arose from the adoption by Herts and Watford Councils of the SPOKES proposed Watford Green Ring. The Eastern loop between the Town Hall and Oxhey Activity Park will be the first section to be developed. We were taken through a preview of the Virtual Ride Through and images of some of the planned junction and other changes. Disappointingly, we learned the council’s current thinking is that the Eastern Loop is a 10-year project. We once again urged that, as well as constructing the Eastern Loop, the council should sign the entire Watford Green Ring.

Both presentations were well received and provoked a good deal of discussion, questions, and comments, which the Officers were pleased to receive.

Thanks to Heather Harris, who stepped down after more than 8 years of excellent service as our Membership Secretary, to Nigel Pollard, our new Membership Secretary, and to John O’Connor, who is now SPOKES Secretary. Thanks also to all the Committee Members for their past service and agreement to serve another year.

The evening ended on a high with a fun Cycling Quiz provided by Nigel Pollard. Thank you, Nigel.

By the time you read this we will have exhibited at Rickmansworth Festival. Looking forward, we have two major Bike Week events. At Woodoaks Farm on Saturday 3 June, as part of the Tour De Ricky event, we will have a recruiting and information table. On Sunday 11 June, we are involved in the Watford Family

Cycling Day and SPOKES Cycle Gathering at George V Park. Help is needed at both events please, details in this Newsletter.

On 1 July, 20 of us depart for a cycling holiday in the Netherlands, based in Leiden, returning on 8 July. The holiday is fully booked but we have a waiting list in case of cancellations. We have two men, but no women, on the list. Members, particularly women, who wish to join the list, please email me. It promises to be a great, sociable week away. Our ride destinations include Amsterdam, Zandvoort Grand Prix Circuit and Gouda Cheese Market.

Campaigning News

Roger Bangs

We need safer cycling routes!!

How do we get better cycling routes? The government provides a small amount of money for Active Travel, which is mainly about utility cycling, and keeping fit and healthy. To get the money, local authorities must have a Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

Locally, Watford has a LCWIP and Three Rivers should have one for consultation by the end of May. Hertsmere's intentions are unknown.

Some of the current local issues are:

- Redesign the clumsy junction of Bushey Mill lane and Little Bushey Lane.
- Promote the Watford Green Ring by signing and having a map informing the public where it is.
- Information about what is happening to Ascot Road, part of the Watford Green Ring.
- The shared path linking the Old Uxbridge Road and the residential service road has been remade. It now allows safe cycling on a parallel route to the Denham Way (A412).
- Hertfordshire County Council are currently reviewing a Five Year- Green Space action Plan on the Ebury Way. Hopefully this will result in improvements particularly at the Rickmansworth end by the Old Travis Perkins site. See the Ebury Way News Item in this Newsletter.

Campaigning Volunteers Wanted

Help make cycling safer. Contact
Roger at
campaigning@spokesgroup.org.uk.

- SPOKES set up a petition on the Herts County Council Website to support our campaign for improvement to the dangerous junction at Water Lane in the High Street contra flow cycle lane. Two members have been knocked off bikes there in the past 18 months, one seriously injured, and we know of others. The petition closed on 5 May with 96 signatures. Thank you to all Members who signed the petition. County Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst supports our campaign, and Herts County Council approved and costed a plan for the reconstruction of the junction. He is demanding that the council put it at the top of its Active Travel spend and is using the petition to support his demands. We know, from observing the junction, that 90% of drivers do not stop at the stop line or look right when entering the High Street. We have so far been unable to gain Police enforcement of the Stop line, but the aim is that the new junction design which improves the cyclist's sight line and forces a definite right turn manoeuvre by vehicles entering the High Street will reduce the risks.

Are you going to support one of the cycle rides based on Woodoaks Farm on Saturday 3 June – details in this newsletter?

Are you aware that, as a consequence of HS2, Sustrans is involved in creating a Cycle Way from Aylesbury to Great Missenden? Eventually this should be part of a Sustrans route all the way though the Chilterns to Denham and London.

Feedback on all campaigning issues raised is welcome. Please send your comments or ideas to campaigning@spokesgroup.org.uk.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES AT SPOKES

SPOKES wouldn't exist without Volunteers. Will you Volunteer? Get involved and help SPOKES make an impact on local cycling. We need volunteers:

Ride Leaders

Do you enjoy cycling in company? Do you have routes you enjoy, and would like to invite other cyclists to join? Why not lead rides on our Rides programme?

You don't need any qualifications and if you don't have a route you can use "Routes For All" and "Members' Routes" on our website to find one. Contact Pam at rides@spokesgroup.org.uk for more information or simply ask our Ride Leaders when out on a ride.

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES AT SPOKES

Campaigning Team

If you are interested in encouraging our local authorities to improve and provide safer cycling routes, or if you have a particular concern about safe cycling locally, please contact Roger at campaigning@spokesgroup.org.uk

Advertiser Ambassadors

Do you regularly visit the cafés or bike shops who offer discounts to Members in return for being featured on our web site and in the newsletter? SPOKES needs volunteers to 'adopt' bike shops and cafés and keep them up to date with SPOKES publicity material. See Peter's article in this newsletter.

Ebury Way News

Roger Bangs

The Ebury Way was established on the route of Lord Ebury's railway, which ran from Watford to Rickmansworth. It is now a part of the Sustrans network (NCR 6/61) linking Slough to St. Albans and beyond. The Ebury Way is well used by walkers, runners and cyclists.

Sustrans often does not own the land its routes run across, but has agreements with the landowners, frequently local authorities. Most of the maintenance on Sustrans routes is carried out by volunteers, but the larger projects are in the main planned, managed and funded by local government.



A lot of good work was carried out in March with a large section of the Ebury Way cleared of vegetation and a new surface covering provided. Also in March, SPOKES' and Sustrans' volunteers cleared a large amount of vegetation ingress on the route near to the Vicarage Road junction.

Around 20 years ago, in a project called "Access for All" funded through Herts County Council, access to the Ebury Way from Church Road, Rickmansworth, was improved by providing a hard surface and reducing the inclines on the route near the canal basin.

However, this part of the Ebury Way has become difficult to use due to tree routes breaking up the surface and the redevelopment on the adjacent site. The tree routes have raised the surface making it hazardous for people on wheels.



The tall building behind the high fence, which was erected on part of the existing route, has made it hard to see or avoid obstructions on the surface.



The current condition of the route has made it less attractive, deterring many people from using the route. Whilst there are alternative routes around this area, none are safe or satisfactory at present.

How can this problem be remedied?

It is believed that the freehold of the land is held by the “Canal & River Trust” and I have been advised the Trust is unlikely to put money into resolving this. Proposals were made in 2021 to Three Rivers District Council on how to overcome the issue. One of the options was to divert the route onto council land. Another option was to cut back the trees, remove the roots and build up the surface of the route. The council’s current position is that the route is not on its land and probably not its issue.

Can the Herts County Council’s Countryside and Rights of Way department assist in resolving this issue to enable access for all again? I believe it may already be involved in improving the Ebury Way.

Woodoaks Farm Event Saturday 3 June

Peter Jackson

More Help Needed Please

This event is at the start of National Bike Week and is linked with the Willesden CTC Tour De Ricky. The plan is for SPOKES’ Members to lead rides which at some stage include Woodoaks Farm, where the café and brewery will be open.

During the day we ask that a few Members are on hand to lead short rides from the Farm for Members of the Public. I can provide a route and a gpx file if needed. Ideally our ride groups will be at the farm between 10am and 4pm.



We also need someone to staff our table. The address is Woodoaks Farm, Denham Way, Maple Cross, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. WD3 9XQ.

Even if you are unable to assist, please drop in, say hello, and socialise. You will also be able to enjoy refreshments at the Tea Shack.

Watford Family Cycling Day and SPOKES National Bike Week Cycle Gathering Sunday 11 June

Peter Jackson

For two years running, SPOKES has held a very successful social Gathering at Chipperfield. This year the Gathering is near Watford Cycle Hub in George V Park, West Watford. Once again it will include led rides to the Gathering, and other Cycling Groups have been invited to join us.

This year, at the request of Watford Borough Council, we have involved a number of other local groups including: Watford Cycle Hub, Shopmobility, Watford and Three Rivers Community Trust, Herts Disability Sports Foundation, Watford Council, Beryl Bikes and British Cycling. There will be fun activities for all ages and abilities. These will include opportunities to try a trishaw and various wheeled transport designed for those



SPOKES
ON HERTS CYCLING GROUP



Watford Cycle Hub



WATFORD
BOROUGH
COUNCIL

with disabilities. British Cycling are running a fun Cyclo Cross course, and the Watford Cycle Hub activities include a Treasure Hunt.

The event will run from 11am to 3pm and we want as many people as possible available for a mass photo shoot at 12.30pm.

Thanks to those who have volunteered already but we still need more help. Please email me as a matter of urgency if you can assist with:

- Leading rides to the Gathering
- Leading rides around the Watford Green Ring from the Park
- Staffing SPOKES information stand.

Thank you.

Advertisers Ambassadors and Publicity

Peter Jackson

You may recall our appeal for volunteers to act as a link between SPOKES and the shops who advertise in our Newsletter, in exchange for a Members' discount when purchasing from the shop. Many thanks to those who have volunteered and taken our literature to place in the shops. I anticipate that we will update each shop at the time of publishing each Newsletter, with interim top ups if needed.

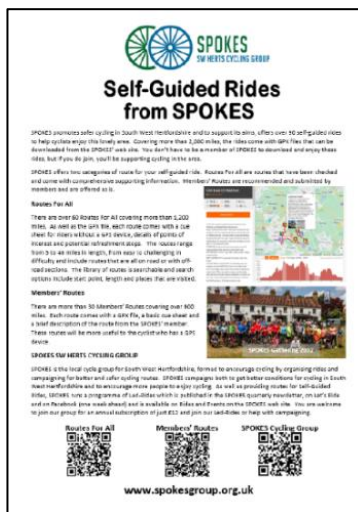
So far, the volunteers are:

Chiltern Velo	<i>Peter Jackson initially</i>	Permanent Ambassador needed
Cycles UK	Diana Ivory	
Leavesden Cycle Hub	Peter Jackson	
Northwood Cycle Depot	Mick Leonard	Thanks, Roger, for initial placement
Ride St. Albans		Volunteer needed
Rock & Road St Albans	Peter Jackson	
Watford Cycle Hub	Peter Jackson	

Can you help? Please contact Peter Jackson.

You may have seen the excellent new leaflet and poster publicising SPOKES and its self-guided rides. We have had them printed in a gloss finish and they have been welcomed by the shop owners we have placed them with. They promote SPOKES and include QR codes to give access to the correct locations for those wishing to join SPOKES, access Routes For All or access Members' Routes.

We are now exploring purchasing leaflet holders to improve the visibility of the leaflets displayed. They are a great advert for SPOKES and all that we do.



The image shows a leaflet titled "Self-Guided Rides from SPOKES". At the top left is the SPOKES logo, a stylized bicycle wheel with the text "SPOKES FOR BETTER CYCLING GROUP". The main title is "Self-Guided Rides from SPOKES". Below the title, there is a paragraph of text: "SPOKES promotes safe cycling in South West Hertfordshire and to support to allow offers over 10 self-guided routes to help you enjoy the local area. Covering more than 2,000 miles, the routes cover both SPOKES (that can be downloaded from the SPOKES website) but you don't have to be a member of SPOKES to download and enjoy these rides. But you do join, you'll be supporting cycling in the area." To the right of this text is a small map showing a route. Below the map is another paragraph: "SPOKES offers two categories of routes for your self-guided ride. Routes For All are routes that have been checked and some with comprehensive supporting information. Members' Routes are recommended and submitted by members and are offered as is." Below this is a section titled "Routes For All" with a sub-heading "There are three All Routes for All covering more than 2,000 miles. As well as the only All Route route (that has a cut sheet for users without a smartphone), details of points of interest and potential refreshment stops. The routes range from 3 to 40 miles in length. From easy to challenging, it offers a wide range of routes that are often used by both off-road sections. The history of routes is available and each route includes start, end, support and phone numbers." Below this is a section titled "Members' Routes" with a sub-heading "There are more than 30 Members' Routes covering over 800 miles. Each route comes with a cut sheet, a track file and a brief description of the route from the SPOKES website. These routes will be more useful to the cyclist who has a GPS device." Below this is a section titled "ROUTES FOR BETTER CYCLING GROUP" with a sub-heading "SPOKES is the local cycle group for South West Hertfordshire. Formed to encourage cycling by organising rides and campaigning for better and safer cycling routes. SPOKES encourages both to get better conditions for cycling in South West Hertfordshire and to encourage more people to enjoy cycling, as well as providing routes for self-guided rides. SPOKES has a programme of localised routes, published in the SPOKES route booklet, on our website and on Facebook (you need to be a member of the SPOKES Facebook group) and on our website. You can join us for an annual subscription of just £5 and join our leaflets or help with campaigning." At the bottom, there are three QR codes labeled "Routes For All", "Members' Routes", and "SPOKES Cycling Group". At the very bottom is the website address "www.spokesgroup.org.uk".

SUSTRANS Path Maintenance

Brian Johnson

Whether you are a social cyclist or cycling to get somewhere, you will have benefited from the network of cycling routes created by SUSTRANS. You will also owe a debt of gratitude to the many volunteers who keep the routes safe and enjoyable.

Locally, this is organised by Stephen Ball, a SUSTRANS volunteer and Coordinator for the West Hertfordshire area. He covers routes from Rickmansworth to St Albans NCN6, St Albans to Hatfield NCN61/The Alban Way and St Albans to Harpenden NCN6. You may have met Stephen if you have been a volunteer on one of the path clearance events SPOKES has supported.

You can be involved in at least two ways.

Stephen organises social rides. These differ slightly from the social rides you enjoy with SPOKES. Not only do you have a social ride, enjoying the scenery and company of the other riders, but you help to keep the routes enjoyable and safe for others by carrying out any maintenance that you see as necessary on the way. You'll be armed with secateurs and pruning saws for use when needed and you'll check the signage. Stephen carries NCN stickers and signs to replace old ones. Details of a Social Maintenance Ride on 18th June is in the Ride Programme in this newsletter.

Stephen also organises vegetation clearance and litter picks. He tries to get as many volunteers as possible to help, including reaching out to SPOKES, other cycling groups, the British Horse Society and Hertfordshire rights of way team. One of the section of routes to benefit from recent work was NCN6, under the M1 in Garston. This is a section of path that I know very well from my days leading rides. Four hours of work cleared 150 yards of path.



SPOKES does advertise some of Stephen's clearance activities but if you would like to get more involved and help keep the NCN network safe and enjoyable for others and yourself, then go onto the Sustrans web site - Sustrans.org.uk - where you'll see they have a new database for volunteers to sign up to. Or contact Stephen via



Facebook –

www.facebook.com/groups/178161195994290/user/1363156547/

- you'll see his posts on the SPOKES Group pages and you can message him from there.

Cycling Efficiency

Abbreviated by Graham Phillips from a quote by Steve Jobs

I think one of the things that really separates us from the high primates is that we're tool builders. I read a study that measured the efficiency of locomotion for various species on the planet. The condor used the least energy to move a kilometre. And humans came in with a rather unimpressive showing, about a third of the way down the list. It was not too proud a showing for the crown of creation.

But, then somebody at Scientific American had the insight to test the efficiency of locomotion for a man on a bicycle. And a man on a bicycle, a human on a bicycle, blew the condor away, completely off the top of the charts.

Useful Cycling Web Services/Apps

Often, when on a bike, road closures aren't a problem. You may need to walk your bike, but you can usually get through. However on about half a dozen occasions I



haven't been able to pass a closure and, in some cases, this has resulted in a lengthy diversion, sometimes

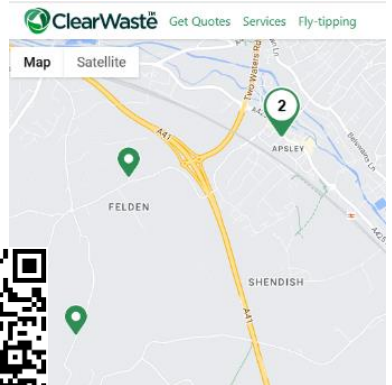


on busy roads. After mentioning this in a Facebook post, Rona pointed me to One.network, which provides a map showing the location and nature of roadworks in the UK, which you can check before you ride.



Even more annoying is fly tipping, which I now see frequently whilst out riding. There is a web site, clearwaste.com, also with an app for your phone, that allows you to report fly tipping. Reporting an incident using the phone app is quick.

If you have any web services or apps that you find useful, please pass the details onto newsletter.spokesgroup.org.uk.



SPOKES Self-Guided Rides

If you are a ride leader or would like to lead a ride but are stuck for a route, try one of our Self-Guided Rides.

Routes For All

Routes For All has 61 routes offering over 1,000 miles of rides ranging from around 3 to 46 miles. These routes all come with a GPS file, cue sheet for those without a GPS and information on points of interest and refreshment stops. Check out www.spokesgroup.org.uk/routesforall/.



Over the past three months the routes have been viewed over 260 times and the top three routes viewed are:

1. Burnham Beeches – route 58
2. Brookman's Park – route 73
3. Rickmansworth via Ebury Way – route 26

Featured Route

This newsletter's featured route is the Merryhill Greenway. It's a flat, easy 8-mile ride, with traffic free sections that show how close the Green Belt is to Watford. There are a few busy roads, but they have cycle paths. And if you've never heard of the Merryhill Greenway, it's a great opportunity to become acquainted and see some new areas to explore. To find the route on Routes For All, under VISIT select Merryhill Greenway.



Members' Routes

There are now over 30 Members' Routes available covering almost 1,000 miles. These routes have been submitted by members and are offered 'as is'. Check out www.spokesgroup.org.uk/membersroutes. Over the past three months there have been over 60 views of the library. The top three routes viewed are:



1. Marlow via Burnham Beeches – route MR0012
2. Forty Green – route MR0033
3. Morton-in-Marsh, Cotswolds - Chipping Campden – route MR0021

Featured Route

The featured route is the Waters Edge Ride. This was called Bluebell Ride after the Bluebell Café until the café was recently taken over and renamed. It is a lovely ride into the Chilterns and, at nearly 40 miles with some hills, will suit the more experienced rider. The route starts from Chipperfield, but you can easily start from around Watford. To find the route in Members' Routes, select the 30–40-mile button under Dacorum.



SPOKES Led-Rides and Events – Spring Programme

Pam Stonebrook – Rides Co-ordinator

Pre-booking on Let's Ride is required for all SPOKES rides.

SPOKES' Members put together a varied programme of social rides. Ride descriptions normally include speed, distance, and hills information to help you find rides that suit you. We ride in a group that chats and enjoys a sociable break en route or at the end of the ride. If you are struggling on the day, you will not be left behind. Rides may be added to the programme after the Newsletter is published. These rides are posted on Facebook and, if there is sufficient time, Let's Ride, the SPOKES website and in an email to Members.



Disclaimer: As a participant of a SPOKES' ride, you must be aged 16 or over unless accompanied by a parent or guardian. You need to be capable of riding in a group on the highway. SPOKES cannot accept liability for you or your possessions. Your safety and wellbeing 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.

What to bring on a ride? Please come to rides with appropriate clothing for the weather and with water, snack, spare inner tube and pump. Bring lights if appropriate. Please carry something that gives your name, address and emergency contact details.

What if the Weather is bad? If bad weather is forecast or in other exceptional circumstances, the ride may be cancelled or changed to ensure enjoyment for all riders. Unless the change happens at the very last minute, notice of the change or cancellation will be posted on Let's Ride, SPOKES website and our Facebook page. Please check before you leave for the start.

Rides Leave on Time! Please turn up at the ride start location ready to leave at the scheduled time.

We are only able to offer a ride programme because cyclists, like you, volunteer.

No formal qualifications needed and if you don't have a route you can use "Routes For All" and "Members' Routes" on our website to find one. Contact Pam at rides@spokesgroup.org.uk.

Ride Speed Guide:

- Slow ----- Gentle up to 8mph
- Medium ----- Average of 9-11 mph
- Fast ----- Average over 12 mph

Ride Categories on Let's Ride:

- Easy Going. SPOKES Slow Pace rides, up to 15 miles, flat and no busy roads.
- Steady. SPOKES Slow Pace rides over 15 miles with some easy climbing and SPOKES Medium Pace rides which are 30 miles or less with some easy climbing.
- Challenging. Any ride with challenging climbs, any SPOKES Fast Pace ride and Medium Pace rides which are over 30 miles.
- Mountain Bike. Off-road rides on unsurfaced trails.

Tips on Use of Let's Ride: If the ride is full, register on the Waiting List, cancellations happen, even at the last minute. Searching for a full ride on Let's Ride is easiest by following the link in the ride description in "Rides and Events" on the SPOKES website.

We would love to offer more rides, and route variations, but to do that we need more Members willing to lead rides. Please speak to, or email, Pam Stonebrook if you are interested in others joining you on your favourite route/s. The SPOKES Routes for All and Members' Routes collections on our website have great routes you can use.

This is the programme at the time the newsletter is published. Additional rides will be announced during the quarter. These are publicised on the SPOKES Facebook Group and are available on the SPOKES Let's Ride Group and the SPOKES websites.

Ride Leaders Wanted

We are only able to offer a ride programme because cyclists, like you, volunteer.

No formal qualifications needed and if you don't have a route you can use "Routes For All" and "Members' Routes" on our website to find one. Contact Pam at rides@spokesgroup.org.uk.

June

Thu 1 **10:00 am Van Hage Garden Centre,
Harvester, Two Bridges, WD3 3RX.**

Ride with **Neil** on roads via Belsize, Flaunden and Chenies to Van Hage for refreshments.

19 miles Medium Any Bike

Sat 3 **11:00 am Woodoaks Farm
Café in the Park, Aquadrome, WD3 1NB.**

Steady ride with **Phillip**, along the canal and surrounding area, back via road through Maple Cross - mostly along canal path and off road.

8 miles Medium No road bikes

Sat 3 **10:00 am Woodoaks Farm
Café in the Park, Aquadrome, WD3 1NB.**

Support the Woodoaks event with **Roger**. A ride, mainly on lanes, though the Swillet and Chalfonts, finishing at Woodoaks Farm, between Maple Cross and Rickmansworth. SPOKES stand and refreshments available.

14 miles Medium Any bike

Sat 3 **11:00am Woodoaks Farm
Woodoaks Farm, Denham Way, Maple Cross, WD3 9XQ.**

Support the Woodoaks event with an easy-going ride with **Katherine**, using quiet roads, cycle paths, canal towpath and around the aquadrome. Refreshments back at Woodoaks Farm.

9.5 miles Slow / Medium No skinny tyres

June

Tue 6 **10:00 am Tuesday Ride**
Cafe in the Park, Aquadrome, WD3 1NB.

Ride with **Roger** on roads and tracks via the Swillet and Chalfonts to Denham Country Park for refreshment. Return though Denham Quarry and Harefield.

18 miles Medium Any bike

Sun 11 **10:30 am Ride to the Gathering**
Aquadrome Café, WD3 1NB.

Cycle with **Roger** on roads and tracks along the Ebury Way and Watford Green Ring, finishing at the Watford Family Cycling Day and SPOKES National Bike Week Cycle Gathering at the Watford Cycle Hub. Bring picnic.

11 miles Medium Any bike

Wed 14 **10:00 am Ricky to The Nickey**
Aquadrome Café, WD3 1NB.

Ride with **Paul** on 'B' roads and The Nickey Line, to The Hub, Redbourn.

35 miles Medium Any bike

Fri 16 **19:00 pm Evening Ride**
Harvester, Two Bridges, WD3 3RX.

Cycle with **Roger** on tracks and roads through Whippendell Wood and the Watford Green Ring. An option to finish at the Red House for refreshment.

10 miles Medium Any bike

Ride Leaders Wanted

Contact Pam at rides@spokesgroup.org.uk.

June

Sun 18 **9:30 am** **SUSTRANS Social Maintenance Ride**
Café in the Park, Aquadrome, WD3 1NB.

Join Stephen Ball on a SUSTRANS Social Maintenance Ride and do your bit to keep the NCN network safe and enjoyable to ride. Probably from Rickmansworth to St Albans, the ride will check out the signage and condition of the NCN route and carry out tidying up of the route if required - pruning saws and secateurs might be needed. The ride should take about 3 hours providing there's not much maintenance to do en-route. Please bring food and drinks. Not skinny tyres. The journey back will be the same way to see what was missed on the outward journey. Let Stephen know if are interested on 07932 660121 or steve178146@googlemail.com. Thanks for your help with this.

Mon 19 **10:00 am** **Elstree Aerodrome**
Watford Rugby Club, Radlett Road, WD24 4JL.

Out with **Diana** via Battlers Green, back via Aldenham Golf course. Enjoy the newly refurbished, welcoming Aerodrome Cafe.

12 miles Slow Any bike

Thu 22 **10:00 am** **Wendover Woods**
Car Park, The Common, Chipperfield, WD4 9BS.

Ride with **Philip** on 'Routes for All Ride 056 Wendover'. A challenging ride into the Chilterns on a road route to Wendover Woods. Refreshment stop at the cafe in Wendover Woods.

33 miles Medium Any bike

Sun 25 **10:00** **Alight here for the pudding stop!**
Kings Langley Community Centre, The Nap, WD4 8ET.

Out through Bedmond, with **Katherine**, to Potters Crouch, St Albans and onto Redbourn where we will have coffee and cake at The Pudding Stop. Back using the Nickey Line to Hemel and Kings Langley.

22 miles Medium Not skinny tyres

June

Wed 28 **10:00 am Grand Union Canal to Wembley
Cafe in The Park, Rickmansworth, WD3 1NB.**

Ride with **Paul**, south then east along the Grand Union Canal towpath, turn northeast along the Paddington Arm to the Yummy PL (Polish Cafe) for lunch. Then roads - some quite busy, others residential - to a circuit around Wembley Stadium, and quiet roads back to Rickmansworth. Pace will be slow - perhaps 9 or 10 mph, but the towpath can be challenging with a gravel path, low hanging branches, pedestrians, dog walkers and narrow sections.

35 miles Challenging Any bike

Tue 4 **10:00 am Tuesday Ride
Harvester, Two Bridges, WD3 3TW.**

Cycle with **Roger** on roads and tracks to Shenley for refreshments. Return via Letchmore Heath.

20 miles Medium Any bike

Wed 12 **10:00 am Ricky to The Nickey
Aquadrome Café, WD3 1NB.**

Cycle with **Paul** on B roads and The Nickey Line to The Hub, Redbourn.

35 miles Medium Any bike

Mon 17 **10:00 am Burnham Beeches
Cafe in the Park, Aquadrome, WD3 1NB.**

Out with **Philip** via Chorleywood, Gerrards Cross, Hedgerley to Burnham Beeches. Return via Beaconsfield, the Chalfonts and Maple Cross. Mainly quiet roads but major roads to cross and short stretches of major road. 1519 feet of climbing, some challenging. Refreshments at The Beeches.

33 miles Medium Any bike

July

Wed 19 **10:00 am Grand Union Canal - Wembley
Cafe in The Park, Rickmansworth, WD3 1NB.**

Ride with **Paul** south then east along the Grand Union Canal towpath, turn northeast along the Paddington Arm to the Yummy PL (Polish Cafe) for lunch. Then roads - some quite busy, others residential - to a circuit around Wembley Stadium, and quiet roads back to Rickmansworth. Pace will be slow - perhaps 9 or 10 mph, but the towpath can be challenging with gravel path, low hanging branches, pedestrians, dog walkers and narrow sections.

35 miles Medium Any bike

Sat 22 **10:00 am Chiltern Velo Cafe for lunch
Aquadrome Café, WD3 1NB.**

Cycle with **Roger**, mainly on quite roads, into the Chilterns via Amersham for lunch at the Velo Cafe. Return via Ashley Green

36 miles Medium Any bike

Tue 25 **10:00 am Slow Ride to Shenley Park
Watford Rugby Club, Radlett Road, WD24 4JL.**

Join **Graham** and take a slow, lazy ride to the Orchard Café at Shenley Park.

12 miles Slow Any bike

Wed 26 **10:00 am Wendover Woods
The Cafe in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome, WD3
1NB.**

Out with **Peter** via Amersham and Hyde Heath to Wendover, return via Wendover Woods Cafe, Ashridge and Sarratt. 2569 ft of climbing, some challenging.

46 miles Medium Any bike

July

Thu 27 **Time tbc Milton Keynes Figure of Eight**
Train to Milton Keynes Central after 9.30am,
MK9 1LR.

Join **Katherine** cycling in a figure of 8 around Milton Keynes using traffic free paths and trails. Lunch at Camp Hill café.

22 miles Slow / med No Skinny tyres

August

Tue 8 **10:00 am Tuesday Ride**
Harvester, Two Bridges, WD3 3RX.

Cycle with **Roger**, mainly on lanes, into the Chilterns passing Bovingdon and refreshments at Chipperfield.

20 miles Medium Any bike

We are only able to offer a ride programme because cyclists, like you, volunteer.

No formal qualifications needed and if you don't have a route you can use "Routes For All" and "Members' Routes" on our website to find one. Contact Pam at rides@spokesgroup.org.uk.

Wed 16 **10:00 am Ricky to The Nickey**
Aquadrome Café, WD3 1NB.

Join **Paul**, cycling on B roads and The Nickey Line, to The Hub, Redbourn.

35 miles Medium Any bike

August

Thu 17 **10:00 am Chiltern Velo, Hawridge**
Cafe in the park, Aquadrome, WD3 1NB.

Join **Philip**, cycling out via Bovington and Ashley Green. Refreshments at Velo. Return mostly quiet country roads. Hilly.

35 miles Medium Any bike

Tue 22 **10:00am An Amazing Ride to Barnet**
Watford Rugby Club, Radlett Road, WD24 4JL.

Short ride to Barnet with **Graham**, to Lewis of London's ice cream farm, where we will enter the maize maze. There is a £7 entrance fee for the maze, and we will be in there for 1-2 hours before we cycle home.

12 miles Medium Any bike

Ride Leaders Wanted

No formal qualifications needed and if you don't have a route you can use "Routes For All" and "Members' Routes" on our website to find one. Contact Pam at rides@spokesgroup.org.uk.

Wed 23 **10:00 am GUC To Wembley**
Cafe in The Park, Rickmansworth, WD3 1NB.

Ride with **Paul** south then east along the Grand Union Canal towpath, turn northeast along the Paddington Arm to the Yummy PL (Polish Cafe) for lunch. Then roads - some quite busy, others residential - to a circuit around Wembley Stadium, and quiet roads back to Rickmansworth. Pace will be slow - perhaps 9 or 10 mph, but the towpath can be challenging with gravel path, low hanging branches, pedestrians, dog walkers and narrow sections.

35 miles Medium Any bike

August

Thu 24 **10:00 am Ashridge House**
Outside Berkhamsted Train Station, Lower Kings Road
HP4 2AR.

Out with **Katherine** to Tring and Long Marston, Cheddington and Ivinghoe, climbing to Ringshall and to Ashridge House for coffee and cake.

24 miles Medium Any bike

Wed 30 **10:00 am Hatfield House**
Timberlake Car Park Radlett Road (charges
and a 4-hour limit), WD24 4JL.

Ride with **Peter** on SPOKES Routes For All route 074. Includes nearly 7 miles well surfaced traffic free. Out via Bricket Wood, St Albans and Alban Way. Back via Hatfield Garden Village, Sandridge and Verulamium Park.

34 miles Slow Any bike

Join SPOKES

Membership costs just £12 per year and £3 for each additional family member. You can complete the application on-line on our website.



Go to: www.spokesgroup.org.uk and click on the JOIN SPOKES tab.

You'll be joining an active campaigning and social cycling group. There is an active led-ride programme. Members have created a library of over 90 self-guided rides covering our area. You will be helping us campaign for improved cycling conditions in the Southwest Herts area. You will also receive regular details of our cycle rides, social events, and other activities in our quarterly Newsletter.

You Also Get Members' Discounts

We have a new bike shop offering 10% discount on spare parts to Members.
Welcome to Rock & Road Bikes of St Albans.

Check with the organisation what they offer discount on





British Cycling*	www.britishcycling.org.uk/clubs/membership	
Chiltern Velo Cafe and Workshop	Hawridge Common, Hawridge, HP5 2UQ 10% discount coffee and tea	01280 416564 www.chilternvelo.co.uk
Cycles UK	484/486 St. Albans Road, Watford, WD24 6QU	01923 243707 www.cyclesuk.com
Cycling UK*	shop.cyclinguk.org/membership/affiliate-membership-myself	
Leavesden Cycle Hub	The Community Building, Leavesden Country Park, College Road, Abbots Langley WD5 0GU Discount-Bike parts only	07340 866123 www.watfordcyclehub.org.uk
Northwood Cycle Depot	118 Pinner Road, Northwood HA6 1BP	01923 824174 www.northwoodcycles.com
Ride St Albans	318 Watford Road, Chiswell Green, St Albans AL2 3DP	01727 614778 www.ridestalbans.com
Rock & Road Bikes, St Albans	117 Victoria Street, St Albans AL1 3TJ	01727 832020 info@rockandroadbikes.com
Watford Cycle Hub	Holywell Community Centre, Tolpits Lane, Watford WD18 9QD Discount-Bike parts only	01923 223994 www.watfordcyclehub.org.uk

* Check the features of the discounted membership against the full membership as something you need may be omitted.

SPOKES' Committee

Chair	Peter Jackson	chair@spokesgroup.org.uk
Treasurer	Pam Mann	treasurer@spokesgroup.org.uk
Secretary	John O'Connor	secretary@spokesgroup.org.uk
Campaigning	Roger Bangs	campaigning@spokesgroup.org.uk
Membership	Nigel Pollard	membership@spokesgroup.org.uk
Rides Co-ordinator	Pam Stonebrook	rides@spokesgroup.org.uk
Newsletter	Brian Johnson	newsletter@spokesgroup.org.uk
Web Master	Graham Phillips	webmaster@spokesgroup.org.uk
Publicity	Lorraine Kennedy	publicity@spokesgroup.org.uk
Watford Cycle Hub Appointed Attendee	Fiona Timme	office@watfordcyclehub.org.uk
Other Members	Katherine Deaney Philip Gibbs	kldeaney@hotmail.com philip.gibbs2@gmail.com

Keep In Contact With SPOKES

SPOKES WEBSITE <u>SPOKESGROUP.ORG.UK</u>		
LED-RIDES and EVENTS Join one of our community rides and support our events.	SELF-GUIDED RIDES ROUTES FOR ALL MEMBERS' Use one of our fully checked routes. Use a member's route.	CAMPAIGNING Support our efforts to improve cycling in South West Herts.
SPOKES FACEBOOK GROUP <u>WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/178161195994290/</u> Find out about what other members are doing, forthcoming rides and ad hoc rides and post your cycling news and discuss issues you are passionate about.		
	SPOKES LETSRIDE GROUP <u>WWW.LETSRIDE.CO.UK/GROUPS/SPOKES-WATFORD</u> Sign up to Let's Ride and join the SPOKES' Group. Keep up to date with SPOKES' rides and invite others to join your rides.	
SPOKES STRAVA CLUB <u>WWW.STRAVA.COM/CLUBS/SPOKES_SW_HERTS</u> Sign up and see where SPOKES' members are riding, how your activity compares with theirs and how you are progressing.		



Jackie wishing she was wearing wellington boots



Wet weather took its toll on many of the Spring Rides.

Peter's Windsor Ride was more like a paddle. Above, the group recover.

Katherine had to resort to plan B for her Milton Keynes Figure of Eight route because of floods. Below, some photos from her ride.



The frog clearly at home!



Katherine needed a boat rather than a bike

bike registration

advice

social rides

maps

Your One Stop Cycling Shops

training

hire

donation & reconditioning

In the Community, for the Community



01923 223994



<https://watfordcyclehub.org.uk/>



07340 866123