

www.spokesgroup.org.uk



Happy riders on Roger B's 25 July Chiltern Ride



Chairman's Chat

Have you been cycling this summer?

There has been a variety of rides over the summer period. Although the total number of SPOKES rides was down, they did include evening, day and half day rides, and even fun events like the London FreeCycle day were there to be enjoyed.

Some rides have been well attended, often with up to half the riders getting the information from Facebook or the GoSky ride web site. As the SPOKES rides are quite random in nature, depending on what the volunteer leaders are able to commit to, no regular pattern of rides evolves. A more regular pattern of rides may develop if we can attract members to lead rides. Advice and help will be offered to members willing to lead a ride.

Changes in SPOKES

Rides Coordinator

Steve Tarn has now relinquished his role as rides coordinator. Thanks to Steve for continuing the role until this edition. Steve has been very conscientious in trying to get more members leading rides. He had a professional approach that will be missed.

We now need someone to take on the role of planning our rides programme. Could this be you?!

Membership Secretary

After several years as membership secretary Richard Bulgin has resigned. He kept the membership records in an effective way, ensuring new members were recorded and renewals took place efficiently, ensuring occasional emails were sent and producing the name and address labels for mailing the newsletters.

Fortunately, Dara has agreed to run the membership system for the foreseeable future. An experienced hand returning, but we will need another person in the longer term.

Membership

We need to change the way our membership information is kept and have decided that this will be done by using the British Cycling Club Management Tool, which provides a readymade membership system for small clubs. It will ensure the provision of a professionally managed system that will be available to SPOKES in the future. We will need some additional information about members to meet the requirements of British Cycling. You will be contacted to gain the detail required. We need to have correct information on all members, particularly email and phone numbers.

In the future selective information is likely to be sent by email, maybe once a month, with the option to opt out of some categories.

You will not be bombarded with unwanted mail.

Campaigning

SPOKES has always been involved in campaigning for improved cycling routes and 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 views on what should happen in their area.

Have you been along the Ebury Way recently? The Bridge over the River Colne has now been resurfaced. A big improvement.

What do think about the maintenance of some of the cycle routes?

Current issues affecting cyclists 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.

South Way, from Hunton Bridge towards Leavesden Country Park.

Access to the new schools that may be built.

If you wish to be involved in campaigning for better cycling routes, let Peter Loader know.

Prudential Ride London FreeCycle 2015

This is the third year of the event and the second one I have attended. Last year I caught a train to Harrow and joined a large Spokes group, cycled to Wembley where the group doubled in size, and thence to Hyde Park. However, with such numbers, progress was slow and by the time we arrived, the actual event was very crowded.

This year would be different! We caught an early train to Moorgate (only two other cyclists on board), and joined the eight mile FreeCycle route by the Bank of England at around 9.30 a.m. This time there were extra Explore Routes round the City, which we took. It was amazing to ride between these huge famous landmarks with no other traffic, apart from a few cyclists. Another extra feature was a traffic-free Waterloo Bridge with its great views of the Thames and riverside buildings.



Cyclists at Trafalgar Square

About halfway round we stopped for coffee at the Green Park Festival Zone. This area had everything for the family, with people of all ages enjoying the various attractions, both cycling and others. We marvelled at the stunt riders, climbing and jumping on and off many large obstacles.

Getting back on to the route, it became very crowded and slow, particularly round Trafalgar Square, where there were many pedestrian crossings and bemused, ambling, foreign tourists. Gradually we hacked our way back towards the City, via the Guildhall Yard Festival Zone, again with lots of attractions. Here we were mesmerised by the incredible tricks of the Extreme Unicyclists, including a hotly contested high jump competition.



Stunt Cyclist at Green Park 1

We left the circuit near the Tower of London and downed a pint of Fullers. Refreshed, we set off along the Thames Path down river. We found a mixture of interesting marinas and cobbles. After a few miles, looking for a return route, just past Limehouse Basin, we went through a small park and joined the canal towpath. The surface was excellent for cycling and we made good progress.

At the junction with the River Lee system, we took the Regent's Canal. Again, this was a good surface, but the path was now rather crowded. We took the chance to leave on a cycle path at Hoxton and headed south to Liverpool Street Station, via Shoreditch. Dragging our bikes onto the platform, we had the good fortune to get a through train to Rickmansworth within a minute!

Richard & Penny Bulgin



Bicycle Service, Repair, Parts and Hire

Watford Cycle Hub is a social enterprise located in the King George V Playing fields. You will also see us around in a modern purpose built vehicle.

www.watforcyclehub.org.uk

We are professional bicycle engineers, qualified ride instructors and ...

We

Repair any bike

Service any bike

Help and instruct you to repair your bikes

Help you service your own bikes

Sell new and reconditioned parts and new accessories (**10% discount to Spokes members**)

Have bikes for hire, off road, hybrid or whatever

Train and help you ride bicycles; organise rides and act as ride leaders for Sky Rides

We have

Sold over 300 bikes and regularly have a stock of 25+ bike Serviced over 600 And 800 people have joined rides with over 40% coming from outside the Watford area

We love cycling and love being with other like-minded souls.

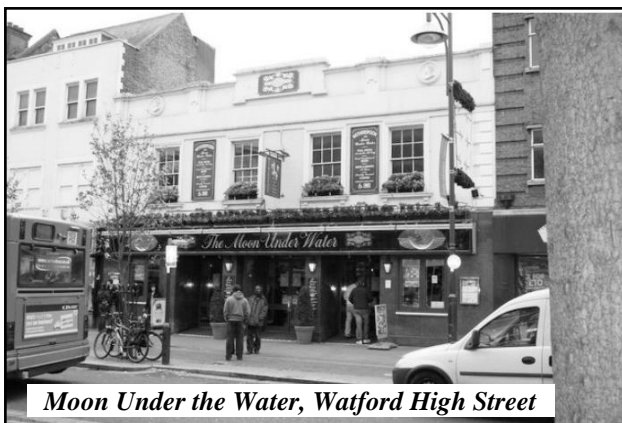
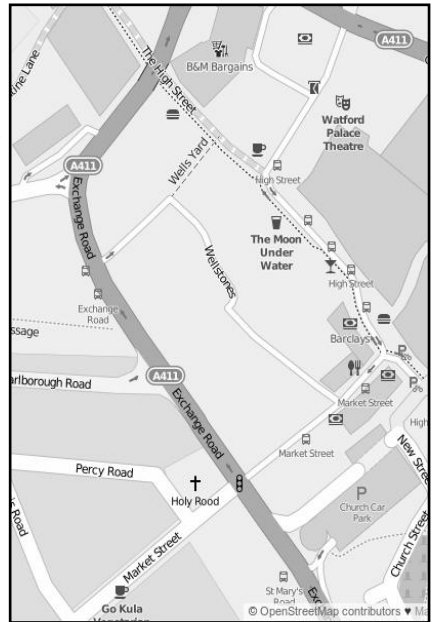
Come and call on us or stop the van or just contact us. See if we can help you or you can help us!

Watford Campaigning – Peter Loader September

Space for Cycling Campaign Meeting – Watford

If you want to campaign for more cycling in SW Herts (Three Rivers District, Watford Borough, and Bushey) then please come to our next campaigning meeting. It will be at The Moon Under Water, 44 High Street, Watford, WD17 2BS on Monday 28th September 2015 at 19:30.

I will be sending out an agenda before the meeting and notes of what was discussed after it.



Watford Campaigning Update – Clive Jones

As many will already be aware, cycling in Watford town centre is getting a boost with the County's commitment (at last!) to install a cyclists' contra-flow lane, which will run from the Intu main entrance down to the Ring Road. Following down into Lower High Street, there will be a Toucan crossing of the Ring Road and shared-use footways, thereby making the journey to Watford High St Station and the main Tesco easier.

Spokes has asked the County to consider improving the cycle access to the centre from West Watford. In particular County must look at making King St two-way for bikes, as well as making the footway between High St Station and the Girls' Grammar School a shared-use path. If anyone has tried to get from West Watford to the town centre by bike, they will know how much the town needs some action from County on this. The large number of people riding the 'wrong way' down Market Street shows that this is an issue of two-wheeled access in the eastward direction.

A new problem to be addressed is the location of market stalls on the Parade in the vicinity of the old Clements building. Watford Borough Council obtained planning permission for this in the autumn of last year, with the aim of increasing the footfall in the north end of the Parade. In this, the Borough can be congratulated on its success but, as an unintended consequence, cycling, during busy periods (ie: most of the time) has become impossible at anything more than walking pace.

I wrote to the Mayor outlining the above and I received a very full reply. There was no acknowledgment of the very negative effect the positioning of market stalls has had on cyclists.

People might have noticed the "share the space" signs that have appeared in the Parade, and read the leaflets. The main message is to slow right down and ring your bell. I would say that at present, you might just as well push your bike and walk, as what we have, for much of the day, is effectively a pedestrianised precinct claiming to be shared use!

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 12 mph

Fast ----- Faster than 12 mph

SEPTEMBER 2015

Thursday 3rd 20.00 Spokes Social Night Moon Under Water, High St.

Watford. Come and enjoy a drink, a meal and a chat with other Spokes members.

Come and share your riding experiences with other cyclists. Wide selection of beers to choose from. Thursday nights at the Moon Under Water are Curry Nights. Non-members are also very welcome. Parking for bikes is available but do bring good padlocks.

Diana

01923 221955

Tuesday 15th 10.00 Tuesday Morning Ride Harvester, Baldwins Lane

A ride on tracks and road to Denham country park. Refreshment stop. One substantial hill. Approx 10mph average speed.

Medium

18 miles

Roger B

01923 720143

Thursday 17th 19.30 Committee Meeting Roger's House

For committee and other interested members. For address contact Roger.

Roger B

01923 720143

Spokes Rides & Events -- Continued

Saturday 26th 10.00 Alban Way Adventure Watford Band Stand, Town Hall. Heading out of Watford via Bricket Wood to St. Albans on cycle ways including Route 6 to explore the Alban Way and return via London Colney.

Fast 26 miles David 020 8429 2882 or
07745 018288

Monday 28th 19.30 Space for Cycling Campaigners' Meeting, Moon Under Water, High St. Watford. Discuss our cycle campaigns, plus enjoy a drink and or meal. Wide selection of beers to choose from. Parking for bikes is available, but do bring good padlocks.

Peter 01923 712655 or
07910 694832

OCTOBER 2015

Tuesday 6th 10.00 Tuesday Morning Ride Harvester, Baldwins Lane
A level ride on good tracks and lanes along the Colne Valley towards Park St. Return along NCR6/61.

Medium 18 miles Roger 01923 720143

Thursday 8th 20.00 Spokes Social Night Moon Under Water, High St. Watford. Come and enjoy a drink, a meal and a chat with other Spokes members. Come and share your riding experiences with other cyclists. Wide selection of beers to choose from. Thursday nights at the Moon Under Water are Curry Nights. Non-members are also very welcome. Parking for bikes is available, but do bring good padlocks.

Diana 01923 221955

Saturday 17th 10.15 Leavesden Country Park Watford Junction Station
Hempstead Road bypass and cycle lanes to Leavesden, with a circuit of the country park (formerly asylum) and visit to Pimlico, before heading back for a break near the canal.

Medium 16 miles David 020 8429 2882 or
07745 018288

Spokes Rides & Events - Continued

Saturday 24th 10.00 Day Ride Harvester, Baldwins Lane
Cycling on road and good tracks through Bedmond to Lassey Bridge and Harpenden. Down the Nicky Line to Redbourne for a pub lunch. Returning via Leverstock Green and the canal path. 10mph average speed.
Medium 35 miles Roger 01923 720143

NOVEMBER 2015

Tuesday 10th 10.00 Tuesday Morning Ride Harvester, Baldwins Lane
Cycle along the canal path, then up the hills to Chipperfield for a coffee. Return via Rousebarn Lane. 10mph average speed.
Medium 18 Roger 01923 720143

Thursday 12th 20.00 Spokes Social Night Moon Under Water, High St. Watford. Come and enjoy a drink, a meal and a chat with other Spokes members. Come and share your riding experiences with other cyclists. Wide selection of beers to choose from. Thursday nights at the Moon Under Water are Curry Nights. Non-members are also very welcome. Parking for bikes is available, but do bring good padlocks.

Diana 01923 221955

Sunday 22nd 10.00 Gorhambury & Verulanium Garston Medical Centre
Ride through Bricket Wood, Potters Crouch and the Gorhambury Estate to the site of Roman Verulanium. Some hills. Lunch at St. Albans. If time permits, a chance to visit the Roman theatre or museum.
Medium 25 Charles Harvey 020 8455 5174
On day 07961 194771

A Couple of photos taken on Blue Book Rides

During this year, on a very ad hoc basis, David Batchelor, Dave Balders and I have started to explore the rides shown in the Spokes Blue Book.



*Blue Book Ride 14
Redbournbury Mill*

We are hoping to ride them all this year, to see if they are still current in terms of accessibility, and to amend, if deemed necessary.

We will endeavour to post on the Spokes website when we are going on these rides, but normally we only make arrangements a day or two beforehand.

*Blue Book Ride 17
Water End*

Posing by Dave Balders





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	



PTO

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



One for the Ladies? – Brians Up Wendover Way social ride



This time with Chris



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.

Spokes campaigns, both to get better conditions for cycling in SW Hertfordshire and to encourage more people to enjoy cycling. You are welcome to join our rides or help us out with campaigning.

You do not have to be a member. If you choose to join it is only £10 a year. Benefits include a newsletter four times a year and discounts at local cycle shops.

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.

Contact Our Committee Here:

www.spokesgroup.org.uk/committee

Or simply visit our web site to catch the latest news and information:

www.spokesgroup.or.uk