



2026 Spring Newsletter – No. 127

30th Anniversary Edition
1996 - 2026



Cover: Photo of young riders taken in the early days of Spokes

If you prefer to receive electronic copies of the Newsletter, please contact

membership@spokesgroup.org.uk



Rides over the Christmas period in Watford and Hemel Old Town



Cyclists on their way to Hatfield with Paul 17th December

Contents

Chat from the Chair	4
Spokes 2026 Gathering Saturday 30 May	5
Spokes Campaigning Report	5
Cycling Holidays	10
Using electric bike batteries in the Winter	10
Poppy Ride London	12
Spokes 30th Anniversary. A Brief History	13
Spokes Rides	16



The beautiful Cheslyn Gardens in Watford, a little paradise with beautiful gardens, pond and bird aviary. Definitely worth a visit.

Chat from the Chair

Peter Jackson

Founded in 1996, we celebrate 30 years of Spokes South West Herts Cycling Group this year. Please try to participate at our Gathering on 30 May to mark the milestone. Details in this Newsletter.

The wet and icy spells this Winter have caused a few rides to be cancelled, but we still managed a reasonable programme, thanks to Steve and the ride leaders. We can now look forward to the Spring programme with, hopefully, some good cycling weather. I know I am not alone in particularly enjoying Spring cycling with hedgerows not yet obstructing the views, more daylight hours and improving weather.

Our holidays programme is now well established. We are offering four holidays this year: St Ives with Katherine in May is fully booked, but beautiful Rimini with Janet in June has vacancies at the time of writing this article. Instead of the Spokes day out which I have been offering for the past several years, I have organised a two-day trip to ride the newly established South Somerset Cycle Way, in addition to the Netherlands Hook, Liden, Amsterdam and Gouda Tour. Both trips are in July and fully booked.

A big thank you for the team who enable the holidays to happen and continue to be successful. This includes Graham Phillips for creating the booking forms, plus advertising and supporting me with the holidays I lead, and Nigel Pollard for auditing the finance and correcting my accounting errors. The key members are Katherine Deaney and Janet Marshall, who each plan, organise and lead holidays. There are numerous members, who offer useful insights and, support, and of course, the very sociable members, who participate in the holidays and contribute to their success. Thank you all.

2027 Holidays programme? Ideas already being sketched out. If you missed out this year book early next.

Note from editor

Please feel free to send articles related to cycling, which you think would be of interest to others, to the editor for the next newsletter. Thank you once again to Pam Mann for proof reading this edition.

Spokes 2026 Gathering Saturday 30 May

Peter Jackson

We celebrate our 30th year with our gathering at Woodoaks Farm Maple Cross, in conjunction with Willesden Cycling Club's Tour de Ricky. Experimentally we have set a later 2.30pm photo shoot this year so that more of those returning from Tour de Ricky rides are able to join us. The aim is for the bulk of members to be there in the afternoon to make it a sociable event. There will be cycling related activities and stalls. More detail will be emailed to members and published in Spokes News on our website nearer the date. Please try to join us, with as many as possible there for the 2.30pm photo.

Iris Bangs is helping me set up our stall for 10:00 opening. If you can help staff the stand for an hour or two between about 11:00 up to and including the 16:00 close and pack away, please email me at chair@spokesgroup.org.uk

Spokes campaigning for better cycling

Roger Bangs

Over the Winter months a few interesting issues have developed.

Century Park Area – Part of the Green Loop

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) have consulted on a possible crossing on the Thomas Sawyer Way at Century Park. They proposed what appears to be a good option namely a new crossing could be provided further along Thomas Sawyer Way west of the existing junction. I believe most people would like this change at what is currently a dangerous crossing for pedestrians and cyclists.

We are still waiting to hear what may happen at the other Century Park junction for access to car parking. We are also hoping the various BT phone cabinets will be removed from the Century Park shared path. HCC should be working on this scheme.

HCC have also been developing a plan for St. Johns Road in Watford, which is also a part of the Green Loop, to have a contra flow lane provided. We believe this work should start in 2027.

At the B&Q store I have noticed cycle parking stands are now in use again. A victory for one of our members.



Cycle parking at B&Q Watford

Ebury Way

In December I had an interesting meeting with a council officer from Three Rivers District Council (TRDC). The long standing issue at the Rickmansworth end of the Ebury Way may get resolved. The track is dangerous because of tree routes and lack of light following development a few years ago. The council have been working with Sustrans – Walking and Cycling to develop a plan for improving access, by cutting back some of the trees and raising the level of the track in the rough areas, allowing a more level route to be established. We hope this can be funded in the near future.

Are you aware that, at the Watford end of the Ebury Way, there is a parallel path to and from the Ebury Way to Colnebank Drive and Thomas Sawyer Way. This route has existed for many years but was suspended due to development of the area. A new track has been provide from behind the flats reinstating the route. Watford Council are hoping to provide signage to the route from the Thomas Sawyer Way.

Also discussed with TRDC was the possibility of improving the access ramp on NCR6/61 from the Aquadrome to the canal bank. This short track is very rough and difficult for both pedestrian and wheelers. Hopefully this track can be made easier to use in the near future.



Part of Sustrans NCR 6/61 linking the Aquadrome to the Canal Path

The next **Watford Cycle Forum** is at 6.00 pm on Thursday 19 March at The Annexe, Watford Council offices. See Spokes website for details.

We hope for information on the following issues:

Century Park car park - road crossing

Thomas Sawyer Way crossing near Activity Park

St. Johns Road - Contraflow cycle lane

Hempstead Road Cycle route

Bushey Lane crossing by Radlett Road.

Signposting of existing routes – particularly from Thomas Sawyer Way to Ebury Way.

Do you have an issue on a road that needs to be fixed? If so, please send a photograph and report it on Fix my Street - <https://www.fixmystreet.com> or on the HCC website.

Hertfordshire County Council – 2026 update for the County Cycling Map

The council is hoping to issue a revised cycle map later this year. Spokes will be reviewing and making comments for the proposed new map.

In preparation we are intending to show all existing and desired cycle routes on a local map we are producing. All members are invited to contribute. We are holding a mapping session at the Watford Cycle Hub on Friday 6 March between 10.00am and 1.00pm. Please come along to inform us about local routes, whether existing or required for the future. If you cannot attend but have ideas, please send to Roger at campaigning@spokesgroup.org.uk

Join Spokes

Membership costs just £15 per year and £5 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 rides, social events, and other activities in our quarterly Newsletter.

Spokes Committee

Chair	Peter Jackson	chair@spokesgroup.org.uk
Treasurer	Nigel Pollard	treasurer@spokesgroup.org.uk
Secretary	Nikolay Vachev	secretary@spokesgroup.org.uk
Campaigning	Roger Bangs	campaigning@spokesgroup.org.uk
Membership	Katherine Deaney	membership@spokesgroup.org.uk
Rides Co-ordinator	Steve Ashford	rides@spokesgroup.org.uk
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Newsletter	Philip Gibbs	newsletter@spokesgroup.org.uk
Web Master	Graham Phillips	webmaster@spokesgroup.org.uk
Publicity	Vacant	publicity@spokesgroup.org.uk
Watford Cycle Hub	Fiona Timme	office@watfordcyclehub.org.uk

Keep in Contact with Spokes

Spokes Website	http://www.spokesgroup.org.uk/rides-events/ Includes, Spokes Rides, Events, Routes, News, Newsletters and Join Spokes online page.	
Spokes Facebook Group	https://www.facebook.com/groups/178161195994290/ See what other Members are doing and Post your own Cycling topics and photos.	
Spokes Let's Ride Group	https://www.letsride.co.uk/groups/spokes-watford Book Spokes Rides. Join our Let's Ride Group (free) to join our occasional Spokes Members' day out rides.	
Spokes Strava Club	https://www.strava.com/clubs/Spokes_SW_Herts Sign up, see where Spokes Members are riding, how your activity compares with others and your own improvement.	
Spokes Instagram Page	https://www.instagram.com/spokes_cycling_group/ Photos, and more from Spokes. Email yours to publicity@spokesgroup.org.uk for publication.	

Spokes Members' Discounts

Check with the organisation what they offer discount on

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

British Cycling*	www.britishcycling.org.uk/clubs/membership	
Cycling UK*	my.cyclinguk.org/new-member/new-member-affiliated	
Leisure Wheels Spokes Ambassador is Katherine Deaney	89 High Street, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP1 3AH	01442 213000 https://www.leisurewheels.co.uk/
Northwood Cycle Depot Spokes Ambassador is Peter Jackson	118 Pinner Road, Northwood HA6 1BP	01923 824174 www.northwoodcycles.com
Ride St Albans Spokes Ambassador is John O'Connor	318 Watford Road, Chiswell Green, St Albans AL2 3DP	01727 614778 www.ridestalbans.com
Rock & Road Bikes Spokes Ambassador is Peter Jackson	117 Victoria Street, St Albans AL1 3TJ	01727 832020 info@rockandroadbikes.com
The Bike Shop (Watford) Spokes Ambassador is John O'Connor	66 Queens Rd, Watford WD17 2LA	07941 800029 www.thebikeshopwatford.com
Watford Cycle Hub Spokes Ambassador is Peter Jackson	Holywell Community Centre, Tolpits Lane, Watford WD18 9QD Discount-Bike parts only	01923 223994 www.watfordcyclehub.org.uk
Dropbar Bike Repair. Spokes Ambassador is Peter Jackson	Unit 14 Riverside Works, Riverside Road, Watford WD19 4HY	01923 590216 www.dropbarbikemechanics.com hello@dropbarbikemechanics.com

Spokes Cycling Holidays

Peter Jackson

The Spokes holidays last year were enjoyed by all. The three holidays each offered something different. Katherine's Birmingham based holiday had the advantage of being easy to reach with some interesting rides exploring Birmingham's extensive canal network and surrounding areas. (Photos on last page). They were City Centre based in a Wetherspoons Hotel, which meant a wide-ranging choice of evening meal venues. Janet led our first Italian holiday, using a very friendly Cycling Hotel in Riccione, near Rimini. Hire bikes with local guides made exploring this beautiful coastal area a real treat. Katherine's report seems to suggest the Birmingham weather was not unlike sunny Italy.

Paul took us to Bruges with rides on some lovely routes and time to explore this beautiful City. A cycle way, much improved in recent years, took us through Dunkirk with ease, then on quiet roads and cycle paths we reached Bruges. The only issue is that France and Belgium do not provide potholes and failed surfaces to add interest to our rides!

The holidays started in 2022 and have been a success. This year we are trying a touring holiday based in the Netherlands led by me. If touring proves to be successful I will try and offer a tour in a region we have yet to explore in 2027. Janet is repeating last year's success with an Italian Holiday based in the same excellent hotel as 2025. Katherine is providing an English holiday this year, based in St Ives, so some scenic rides in flat country.

Using electric bike batteries in the winter

From various sources:

Did you know that a change in temperature can have a big impact on your e-bike battery? Operating them in cold temperatures can not only reduce the range available, but also change how "powerful" your bike feels to ride.

Why does cold weather affect e-bike batteries?

E-bike batteries are made from groups of lithium-ion cells a bit like large AA batteries, either Lithium Metal Cobalt or Lithium Graphite which are wired together in various different formations to produce a larger battery pack. A pack made up of these cells is only as strong as the weakest cell within it so will seemingly fail when only one cell is damaged. The chemistry of all these cells is significantly affected by temperature making it much less efficient. The capacities

you see referenced on batteries are measured at 25 degrees celsius – if they are operated at a lower temperature, they will not be able to store or discharge as much energy. At zero degrees celsius, your battery can only hold 80-85% of its stated capacity. It also will not be able to provide as much power to the motor as when it is warm.

What does that mean in real-world use?

In simple terms; you won't be able to ride as far, and your bike won't feel as powerful. Because the battery is not putting out as much power, you may use your motor more frequently, further reducing the range available. You'll really notice this as the battery's charge drops below 30%, when the battery might start to cut out to protect itself. In the last 3rd of your battery capacity, you'll notice the reduced power delivery more starkly – acceleration will be slower and climbs will be less easy.

At temperatures below 5 degrees, cells can be chemically damaged in use. E-bike batteries can be used in these temperatures, but it isn't great for their long term health.

How can you get the most out of your battery in the cold?

- Always charge your battery somewhere above 10 degrees. This probably means bringing it inside to warm up for an hour or so before charging it.
- Despite headlines about cheap, dodgy batteries catching fire, it's actually safer long term to charge indoors than charging in a frozen, damp shed, because charging in cold conditions chemically damages the battery.
- If you ride in the cold, keep the battery indoors at room temperature until it's ready to be used. It will retain its temperature for a little while, and will probably generate a bit of heat from being used which will help it perform better and protect it.
- Try not to run your battery down to zero charge in the cold – it won't be able to provide much pedal assistance below 30% charge, and it's not good for the long-term health of the cells.
- If you're stopping somewhere mid-ride, remove your battery from your bike at your destination to bring it indoors with you, which will retain more capacity and power when you want to use it again.
- If you're not riding in the cold weather, keep your battery warm and topped up while it's being stored. Aim to keep it between 30-80% charged and check it once a month. Don't leave it sat out in a cold shed with no charge – this is a great way to damage cells and cause a battery pack failure.

Poppy Ride London

Paul Harding

The “Poppy Ride London”, and its new variations (east and west London) are three routes that I have researched using Strava, Google Maps (and Streetview), London Remembers and Wikipedia.

They all begin and end opposite 199, Borough High Street, London - which is the headquarters of the Royal British Legion. Some of you will already be familiar with the original version, adapted to enable easy access from a train passing through Watford (or at least the Metropolitan Line) having already joined me on one of the two “Spokes Poppy Ride London”.

The first outing was in April 2024, and I have led similar rides every month since. I lead no other Guided Rides, and British Cycling require all their ride leaders to arrange 8 rides per year - but rides under the Spokes system don’t count!

This is how it all began.

In 2017, the Royal British Legion arranged a 20 or so mile bike ride called “Poppy Ride London” that set off from their headquarters. About 30 or so cyclists took part and I was one of them. There was a modest fee to pay, but no fundraising required. They didn’t do it again, but they did develop the idea by doing a “Poppy Ride Shropshire” shortly before the COVID epidemic, and last year “Poppy Ride Kent”. Both required a modest fee, but also a decent amount of fundraising.

To find out more, use this QR code to go to the Legion’s National Cyclist’s Branch website. From there, navigate to the east or west route using the side bar menu.



You will see several Poppy Rides London in the rides programme.

Note from Paul Harding

I'm cycling to Paris to raise money for the Poppy Appeal in September 2026.

And, as it will be the 30th anniversary of this flagship fundraiser, I'll be cycling back, too.

If you would like to sponsor me, thank you very much - please use the QR code.



Spokes 30th Anniversary - A brief history

Based on article by Pam Mann from 2021

Spokes will be 30 years old this year! It was in May 1996 that a number of Sustrans supporters met at the Two Bridges pub in Croxley, with a view to setting up a local cycling group, and over the course of the following year Spokes was formed.

The first memorable event was the ride up to the Cart and Horses at Commonwood, which took place on a beautiful day in early June 1996, and in which over 70 people took part.

June 1996 the first ever Spokes ride



From the very beginning Spokes has had two main aims: to campaign for better facilities and infrastructure for cyclists in SW Hertfordshire and to encourage people of all ages and abilities to get out into the countryside on their bikes.



Young riders in the early days of Spokes

Campaigning has not always been easy over the years, especially during austerity, but Spokes has made a notable contribution in influencing the development of facilities for cycling in SW Herts. Alongside campaigning we have run a programme of social rides, which have been well attended, particularly since the advent of Sky Rides and more recently Let's Ride rides.

In 2006 to celebrate Spokes' 10th Birthday, there was a ride along the Ebury Way and a lovely picnic by the River Chess in Ricky, complete with birthday cake and champagne!



**10th Anniversary ride
and celebrations**

Ten years later we organised two rides to mark Spokes 20 years; one a picnic ride from The Cycle Hub to the Aquadrome in Rickmansworth and the other retracing the route of the first inaugural ride to the Cart and Horses. For both rides the sun shone and everyone enjoyed themselves.



**20th Anniversary ride
and celebrations
(Above and left)**

The 25th Anniversary was celebrated on 2021 with an evening anniversary ride and social gathering at the Windmill Pub in Chipperfield in July, plus a Anniversary Gathering in August at Chipperfield Common for members and their families, preceded by two gathering rides, one from Cassiobury Park and the other from the Aquadrome. Great fun! A new initiative was also launched on our website: The 'Spokes Rides for All' project - a library of routes created by Spokes members. This is still very much in use today.



25th Anniversary ride and celebrations

Since this gathering there have been further gatherings at Chipperfield and at Woodoaks Farm, and the cycling holiday programme has been greatly expanded with trips around the Black Country, the Viking Trail, Huntington, Belgium, Normandy, Holland and Italy to

name but a few! Thank you to all those who organise these wonderful adventures.

Gatherings at Chipperfield



This year there are plans to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Spokes with events planned, which you can read about elsewhere in this newsletter.



2024 Gathering at Woodoaks Farm

Spokes Rides and Events Programme

Spring 2026

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, Spokes Web Site and in an email to Members. ***Please note some rides will now only be available for booking two weeks in advance. If you find the ride you are interested in is fully booked, please check again nearer the time. This is to avoid the repeated occurrence of cancellations which has become a bit of an issue on some rides.***

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.

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

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 Steve Ashford, if you are interested in others joining you on your favourite route/s. The Spokes 'Rides for All' collection on our website has great routes you can use.

Short Notice Rides

Members can add extra rides at short notice using an online form on the Spokesgroup website. Click 'Rides and Events' at the top of the screen, scroll down to the end of the list of rides and you will find a form to fill in with details of your ride.

March

Wed 4 Mar 10.00 am – Wendover Woods

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Paul H.** Chenies, Chesham, Cholesbury, Wendover Woods, Amersham. Rest stop at the cafe in the woods.

37.5 miles **Fast** Road bike

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Thu 5 Mar 10.00 am – Not so Lazy Ride to Lazy Llama

Tasty Bean Café, Oxhey Activity Park, Wiggenhall Rd WD18 0HZ

Ride with **Steve**. Out via Cassiobury and Bedmond to the Lazy Llama at Chiswell Green. Back via Bricket Wood.

18 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Fri 6 Mar 10:00 am – Spokes Cycle Routes Consultation

Watford Cycle Hub, Chaffinch Lane, Watford WD18 9QD

Join **Roger** and **Peter** to offer your views on current and needed local cycling infrastructure. Drop in at a time to suit yourself between 10:00 and 13:00

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Sat 7 Mar 10.00 am – Poppy Ride London

Costa Coffee. 134 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LB

Cycle Tour of London led by **Paul**. This is a 22 mile sightseeing tour around London, starting and finishing at the Costa Coffee at 134, Borough High Street, London. We'll have a bite of lunch at a cafe in Hyde Park.

22 miles **Medium** Any bike

Tue 10 Mar 10.00 am – Black Park

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Roger**. Cycle on roads and tracks though the Swillet and Chalfont St. Giles to Black Park for refreshments. Return via Maple Cross.

30 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Wed 11 Mar 10.00 am – Chiltern Velo

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Paul H.** Chorleywood, Little Chalfont and Chesham, back through Ashley Green, Bovington and Chipperfield

30.7 miles **Fast** Road bike

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Thu 12 Mar 10.30 am – Cassiobury Park

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Chris**. Ebury way, back through Croxley Green

15 miles **Slow** Any bike

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Tue 17 Mar 10.00 am – Whitewebbs Transport Museum

Tasty Bean Café, Oxhey Activity Park, Wiggenhall Road, Watford WD18 0HZ

Ride with **Peter** to visit this North London Transport Museum with a Bicycle section. £12 entry, anticipate spending 2-3 hours there, including Cafe. <https://www.whitewebbsmuseum.co.uk/>. Out via Shenleybury and Ganwick Corner, return via Hadley and Borehamwood. 1,944' of climbing.

38 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Thu 19 Mar 6.00 pm – Watford Cycle Forum

The Annexe, Watford Council Offices WD17 3EX

Members are welcome to this Forum. A link to book will be sent to all members before the event.

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Sun 22 Mar 10.00 am – Harpenden and Return

Vue Cinema Car Park, Watford WD25 7JL

Ride with **Noel**. To Harpenden, out via Bricket Wood and St. Albans. Back Via St. Albans. Mix of roads (a few quite busy) and unpaved tracks. Not suitable for Skinny tyres.

26 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Wed 25 Mar 10.00 am – The Ways to Hatfield

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Paul H.** Watford, St Albans, Hatfield. Mostly country lanes and cycle tracks. Rest stop at The Red Lion, Hatfield

36 miles **Fast** Any bike

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Thu 26 Mar 10:00 am – St Albans Circular

Outside Leverstock Green Library, Hemel HP3 8QG

Ride with **Katherine**. Through Gorhambury Estate, then head clockwise around St Albans to Sandridge for coffee, join the Alban Way back towards Verulam Park. Home via Potters Crouch. Free car park at the side of Leverstock Green Library. Not suitable for skinny tyres.

21 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sat 28 Mar 10.00 am – Poppy Ride West London
Costa Coffee. 134 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LB

Cycle Tour of London led by **Paul**. Passing over 60 points of interest!

23 miles **Medium** Any bike

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April

Wed 1 Apr 10.30 am – Wendover Woods
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Paul H.** Chenies, Chesham, Cholesbury, Wendover Woods, Amersham.
Rest stop at the cafe in the woods.

37.5 miles **Fast** Road bike

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Thu 2 Apr 10.30 am – Bricket Station Wood Tea room
Tasty Bean Café, Oxhey Activity Park, Wiggenhall Road,
Watford WD18 0HZ

Ride with **Kim**. Cycle via BRE to Bricket wood then back via Garston

14 miles **Slow** Any bike

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Tue 7 Apr 10.00 am – Chiltern Lanes
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Roger**. Cycle mainly on lanes towards Bovington, Refreshments at
Chipperfield. Return via Croxley Green.

21 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Thu 9 Apr

10.30 am – Berkhamsted and Tring

Canal Fields, Broadwater, Berkhamsted (near station) HP4 2AL

Ride with **Steve**. A circular route around Wigginton, Tring, Ivinghoe and Ashridge. A bit of canal towpath and cycle path but mostly quiet roads. Some hills, about 1500 feet of climbing. Refreshment stop part way round.

24 miles

Medium

Any Bike

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Sat 11 Apr

10.00 am – Poppy Ride East London

Costa Coffee. 134 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LB

Cycle Tour of London led by **Paul**. 22 miles cycle tour of east and central London, passing over 100 points of interest including Cutty Sark, Millennium Dome and the Thames Barrier

22 miles

Medium

Any bike

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Wed 15 Apr

10.30 am – Grand Union Canal to Wembley

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride south then east with **Paul** along the Grand Union Canal towpath, turn north east along the Paddington Arm to the 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, because the towpath can be gravelly, low hanging branches, pedestrians, dog walkers and narrow sections. I usually use my Brompton for this ride.

34 miles

Medium

Any bike (not skinny tyres)

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Thu 16 Apr

10.30 am – Chipperfield Tennis Club

Watford Metropolitan Line Station WD18 7LE

Ride with **Chris**. Whippendell woods Chipperfield and Sarratt.

20 miles

Slow

Any bike

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Fri 17 Apr Time TBC – Milton Keynes Figure of Eight
Outside Milton Keynes Railway Station MK9 1LA

Ride with **Katherine**. Spokes day out - members only. Take the train from Herts for a day ride and lunch stop. MK has extensive cycle network, plenty of traffic free paths / tracks. Lunch at Camp Hill Cafe. Expect to be out the whole day. Start time TBC depending on train times.

22 miles **Slow/Medium** Any bike

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Mon 20 Apr 10:00 – Harpenden and Hemel
Vue Cinema Car Park, Watford WD25 7JL

Ride with **Noel**. To Harpenden, out via Bricket Wood, and St. Albans, back via the Nicky Line, Hemel and the Grand Union Canal. Mix of roads (a few quite busy), unpaved tracks and canal towpath Not suitable for Skinny tyres.

26 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Thu 23 Apr 10.30 am – Fishery Wharf Cafe
Tasty Bean Café, Oxhey Activity Park, Wiggenshall Road,
Watford WD18 0HZ

Ride with **Peter** out via Loudwater and Chipperfield, refreshment stop at the Fishery Wharf canal side Café, Hemel Hempstead. Return via Kings Langley and Hunton Bridge. All road plus Gipsy Lane reasonably surfaced Cycle/Walkway. 989' of climbing.

24 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sat 25 Apr 10.30 am – Velo Ride
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Roger**. Roads and lanes via the Chess Valley to the Cycle Café at Hawridge for refreshments. Return though Sarratt and Croxley Green.

35 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Wed 29 Apr 10.00 am – The Ways to Hatfield
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Paul H.** Watford, St Albans, Hatfield. Mostly country lanes and cycle tracks. Rest stop at The Red Lion, Hatfield

36 miles **Fast** Any bike

May

Sat 2 May 10.00 am – Poppy Ride London
Costa Coffee. 134 Borough High Street, London SE1 1LB

Cycle Tour of London led by **Paul**. 23 miles cycle tour of London.

23 miles **Medium** Any bike

Mon 4 May 10.00 am – Stanborough Lakes
Vue Cinema Car Park, Watford WD25 7JL

Ride with **Noel**. To Bricket Wood, Park Street, Alban way and Hatfield. Alban way and Chiswell Green for return leg. Not suitable for Skinny Tyres.

26 miles **Medium** Any bike

Tue 5 May 10.00 am – Chiltern Velo
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Paul H.** Chorleywood, Little Chalfont and Chesham, back through Ashley Green, Bovingdon and Chipperfield

30.7 miles **Fast** Road bike

Thu 7 May 1.30 pm – Three Rivers Museum, Rickmansworth
Tasty Bean Café, Oxhey Activity Park, Wiggenhall Road, Watford WD18 0HZ

Ride with **Kim**. Cycle via Cassiobury and part of Ebury way to the museum. 30 minutes to look around then to the Aquadrome for coffee. Back via Ebury way.

14 miles **Slow** Any bike

Sat 9 May 10.00 am – Redbournbury Mill
Car Park, The Nap, Kings Langley WD4 8ET

Ride with **Katherine**. Bedmond, Potters Crouch, skirt around the edge of St Albans to Redbournbury Mill for coffee and opportunity to see the mill and buy bread to take home. Home via Redbourn and Hemel. Not suitable for skinny tyres.

22 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Mon 11 May 10.00 am – Chiltern Ride to Great Missenden
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Roger**. Cycle on road and lanes via Chesham and Pednor to Gt Missenden for refreshments. Return via Holmer Green and Chalfont St. Giles.

34 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Wed 13 May 10.30 am – Grand Union Canal to Wembley
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride south then east with **Paul** along the Grand Union Canal towpath, turn north east along the Paddington Arm to the Polish Café 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, because the towpath can be gravelly, low hanging branches, pedestrians, dog walkers and narrow sections. I usually use my Brompton for this ride.

34 miles **Medium** Any bike (not skinny tyres)

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Thu 14 May 7.30pm – Committee Meeting
Watford Cycle Hub, Chaffinch Lane, Watford WD18 9QD

All Members welcome to attend our Committee Meetings.

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Wed 20 May 10.00 am – The Ways to Hatfield
Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Paul H**. Watford, St Albans, Hatfield. Mostly country lanes and cycle tracks. Rest stop at The Red Lion, Hatfield

36 miles **Fast** Any bike

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Thu 21 May 10.00 am – Black Lake
Cassiobury Park Car Park, Watford WD18 7LG

Ride with **Noel**. To Rickmansworth, and Denham to Pinewood Studios. Return via Langley Park Country Park, Iver, then along some parts of Grand Union Canal to Rickmansworth and Ebury Way. Not suitable for skinny tyres.

42 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Fri 22 May 10.30 am – Chenies, Chorleywood
Watford Metropolitan Station WD18 7LE

Ride with **Chris**. A meander through Whippendell woods, Sarratt and Chorleywood

20 miles **Slow** Any bike

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Tue 26 May 7.00 pm – Short ride to a Pub
Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Steve**. Short ride to a pub, probably the Cart and Horses at Commonwood for a drink. Return via Chipperfield and Sarratt. Bring lights.

15 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Thu 28 May 10.00 am – Hughenden Valley
Tasty Bean Café, Oxhey Activity Park, Wiggenshall Road,
Watford WD18 0HZ

Ride with **Peter** out via the Chalfonts and Hazlemere, return on same route. 2,182' of climbing, some challenging.

42 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sat 30 May 10:00 am – 30th Anniversary Spokes Gathering
Woodoaks Farm, Denham Way, Maple Cross WD3 9XQ

Help celebrate Spokes' 30th year by joining us at Woodoaks Farm. Combined with Tour de Ricky we will again hold our Annual Gathering at Woodoaks this year, Spokes Information stall will open at 10:00. There will be other Cycling related activities and stalls, with a mass photo shoot at 2.30 p.m.

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Sat 30 May 11:00 am – Ride to Spokes Gathering

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Roger**. Cycle on lanes and road though Heronsgate and Chalfont St.Peter on a circular route to the Spokes Gathering at Woodoaks Farm.

15 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sat 30 May 12:00 am – Ride to Spokes Gathering

Woodoaks Farm, Denham Way, Maple Cross WD3 1NB

Ride with **Katherine**. Circular taster ride from Woodoaks to the aquadrome and back. Not suitable for skinny tyres.

10 miles **Slow** Any bike

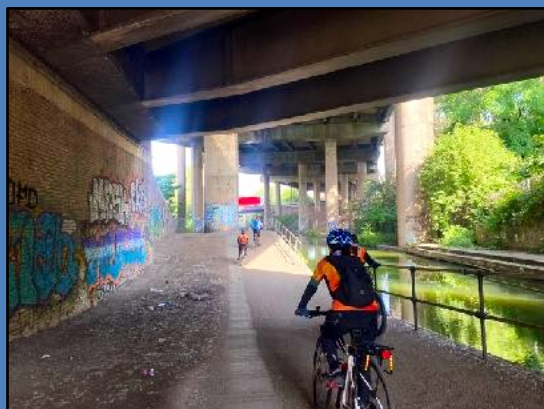
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Ride Leaders

This Spring we welcome Noel as a new Spokes ride leader. He is leading several rides from Watford. Please offer your support to Noel.

Do you enjoy group rides? Do you have routes that you enjoy and would like to invite other cyclists to join? Then why not lead rides in our rides programme? Ride Leading is not onerous and I can provide guidance. Contact Steve at rides@spokesgroup.org.uk for more information.





Photos from Katherine's cycling holiday
In the Black Country 2025



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