



2026 Autumn Newsletter – No. 129

*30 Years
1996 - 2026*



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

membership@spokesgroup.org.uk

A selection of Spokes rides from this summer



1. Hughenden Manor Community Café with Peter
2. Elstree Aerodrome with Phil
3. Black Park with Noel.
4. Cassiobury in the heat wave with Chris
5. Chipperfield with Chris
6. Rusty Bean Café with Roger



Cover: Netherlands holiday. Ready to leave Hook of Holland

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30th Anniversary Celebrations Woodoaks Farm

Chat from the Chair

Peter Jackson

It has been a busy and successful summer for Spokes, with our regular rides being well supported, in addition to several special events. In May and June we had successful events, with the Annual Gathering and a stand in Watford High Street as part of Great Big Green Week. We intend running the gathering and participating in Great Big Green Week again in 2027.

The three Spokes cycling holidays offered this year were all a success,, with participants telling us how good each of the trips were. Next year's holidays are already in the planning stage. Many thanks to the holiday leaders and the support team who enable the holidays to run. Thanks also to all the participants making them enjoyable sociable events with some great teamwork.

On the campaigning front, the new Unitary South West Herts Local Authority will result in a change to the councillors we need to influence. Let us hope that in respect of cycling infrastructure provision and maintenance it is a change for the better. Time will tell.

Ironically, in respect of UK cycling culture and infrastructure, on our return from the Netherlands cycling tour, there was no mistaking the fact that we were back in the UK when we disembarked in Harwich. Even before we left the port we encountered potholes, close passing by cars and poor cycling signage. There is a lot we could learn from the Netherlands and other European countries, if there was the will to do so.

I have always appreciated the sociability, willingness to help and team working of Spokes members, but on the second day of our members only Somerset Cycle Way ride those wonderful benefits of belonging to Spokes were demonstrated at a level way above my previous experience. I was taken ill and had to stop riding 22 miles from the finish. The support and actions of the six members with me at the time were amazing. They got me to appropriate medical care, got my bike back to Yeovil and a member stayed with me that night changing his original plans to accompany me back to Watford by train on Wednesday. There we were met by another of our group to transport us home. I have named no one as they may not want that, but what examples of Spokes friendship they all are!

Spokes 30th Anniversary Gathering

Peter Jackson

This year's gathering at Woodoaks Farm marked Spokes 30th year since we were founded in 1996. A glorious sunny day with about 500 cyclists, plus families, visiting the farm for the Tour De Ricky rides, our gathering plus other cycling and family fun attractions. It was great to see so many members coming along to socialise and join in the activities.

We ran a cycling related Highway code and Trivia Quiz. Thank you to all who entered, the top placed entrants were:

Joint 1st place: Andy Parsons, Steve Ashford and Ann Cordery;

Joint 4th place: Peter North, Iris Bangs, Kevin Cooper and Judith Conlon.

Thank you Iris, Phil, Debbie, Graham and Peter North for helping with our stand. Thank you Roger and Katherine for offering rides.

It was a bonus that the Three Rivers Council Leader, Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst accepted our invitation to visit. He enjoyed himself and the smoothie he made by some furious pedalling of a smoothie making bicycle! Quite a lot of our members rode one of the Tour De Ricky rides as well as taking part in the gathering.

I think this fun festival is now embedded as an annual event so see you there in 2027.

Campaigning News

Roger Bangs

Dutch Surprise

On the recent Spokes holiday to Holland 24 members boarded the overnight ferry from Harwich to the Hook of Holland. Apart from being an interesting enjoyable cycling holiday, it was an education in the art of establishing a complete safe cycling network.

Holland is a country that in the 1970s rebelled against the number of people being killed by cars. They influenced the government to create a safe cycling network. No matter where you wish to cycle to, there will be a safe cycling route. Often it will be segregated, keeping you away from motorised traffic. Consequently most people cycle for all their short journeys and most Dutch

people look fit and healthy. I was amazed at how often elderly people passed us on their sit-up and beg bikes. So if we wish to follow the Dutch experience getting more people cycling, we need to actively encourage our local politicians to put more resources into establishing continuous safe cycling routes.

Influencing local politicians

We now have a new government again! Also at a local level, we will have a new Unitary Authority replacing Watford, Three Rivers and Hertsmere councils.

It will be interesting to see if Hertfordshire Highways stays as one strategic authority, or if each new Unitary Authority has its own highways authority. Either way, if we want better cycling routes, we need to be involved as cyclists and working with the future local politicians.

Local Cycle Forum

We hope to have the next Watford cycle forum in October or November. On the Green Loop, following the recent improved crossing at Thomas Sawyer Way, it will be interesting to hear about the proposed changes for the crossing into Century Park and the contra flow lane on St. Johns Road. We will need to remind the councillors and officers about other long standing issues where changes are required.

For the future it will be good to have one Cycle Forum for the new larger authority; we need to influence our future councillors to bring this about.

In August this year, Three Rivers Council should be improving High Elms Lane near Garston, providing a safer cycle route and controlling the parking of cars.



It would be good if the existing Hertfordshire Highways Authority could liaise with Buckinghamshire Highways to provide a continuous cycle track from the Old Uxbridge Road on the Hertfordshire boundary toward Denham, where there is a missing half mile of a safe cycling route up to the new shared paths that were created in covid times, probably funded by HS2 mitigation funds.

Rimini Cycling Holiday: Sunshine, Challenge and Pure Pleasure

Janet Marshall

Our second cycling holiday in Rimini, based at Hotel Gambrinus in Riccione, proved to be every bit as enjoyable as our first—perhaps even more so. We arrived on 4 June, slightly later than last year's late-May visit, and were greeted by glorious sunshine. The warmer weather transformed both the landscape and the Adriatic Sea, providing ideal conditions for cycling and relaxation alike.



Our first ride set off on 5 June. Guided by the excellent local



team, we explored the rolling countryside of Romagna, visited its charming hilltop castles, and admired the rich heritage of the ancient Roman city of Rimini. Yet the highlight of the week was always going to be our ambitious ride to San Marino.

Surrounded by north-central Italy, the tiny Republic of San Marino is one of the world's oldest republics. Its historic capital, perched high on Mount Titano, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, famous for its medieval walls,

narrow cobbled streets and the magnificent three towers that have watched over the republic since the 11th century. Standing proudly above the surrounding countryside, it offers not only a fascinating glimpse into history but also breathtaking panoramic views.

The climb to San Marino is not for the faint-hearted, and our hotel manager, Maria, thoughtfully arranged for a second guide to accompany us in case anyone chose to abandon the ascent. It was a reassuring gesture, although, as events unfolded, nobody was prepared to give up.

The day became a wonderful example of teamwork and encouragement. Several of our riders struggled with unfamiliar gear changes on their bikes, but we came each other's rescue. At one particularly steep section, Martin Quaid even gave one of the riders a timely push, helping him conquer the hill. By the time we approached the summit, the guide assigned to escort anyone back had quietly turned around, realising that every rider was determined to reach the top.

And reach it we did.

For many of us, it was the most demanding climb we had ever attempted. Yet the sense of achievement upon arriving in San Marino was unforgettable. The fatigue quickly disappeared, replaced by pride, laughter and the shared satisfaction of having accomplished something that had seemed daunting only a few hours earlier. It was undoubtedly one of the finest moments of the holiday.

Back at Hotel Gambrinus, each day settled into a wonderfully satisfying rhythm. After every morning's ride, we returned to a hearty lunch before spending the afternoon swimming in the warm Adriatic, relaxing on the beach or enjoying a gentle spin along the coast.

The evenings were equally memorable. Chef Mattia delighted us with beautifully prepared meals that combined the best of traditional Italian cooking with imaginative contemporary touches. Accompanied by excellent local wines and warm hospitality, every dinner became a celebration of another successful day in the saddle.

Looking back, I realised that a Rimini cycling holiday offers the perfect recipe for happiness: eat, drink, ride, sleep.

Simple. Healthy. Rewarding. Pure pleasure.



Cambridgeshire Adventure

Katherine Deaney



Fourteen Spokes members enjoyed a holiday around Cambridgeshire. Katherine organised the trip and all the arrangements herself, and was supported and assisted by our webmaster Graham Phillips. This enabled more people to join the heavily over subscribed trip.

The group were based in the charming market town and historic inland port of St Ives. There are an abundance of pubs and restaurants to choose from.

The weather was glorious and got a bit too hot towards the end of our stay.

Places visited included:

Houghton Water Mill

Houghton Water Mill is owned and run by the National Trust who do guided tours of this large and imposing water mill. In its heyday, 3 water wheels powered 10 pairs of mill stones which were staffed by 18 millers. Once the demand for water powered mills had diminished, following the rise of more efficient steam power, the mill fell into disrepair and was closed in 1928.

By 1934, it was bought by the local council who converted it into a youth hostel that could accommodate up to 50 weary travellers. It was acquired by the National Trust in 1939.

Cambridge

Our first day trip was to Cambridge, which is an easy cycle along the busway. For those not familiar with the “busway” concept, it began life as a railway line, which was closed during the Beeching era.

The track bed was removed and the line was converted into a guided busway that opened in 2011. It is the longest guided busway in the world at 16 miles! Alongside the busway is a purpose-built traffic free tarmac path for use by



walkers, cyclists and horse riders. It is predominantly flat, but goes through villages with stops to allow passengers to join and leave the service. Buses can travel up to 60mph and they have priority through traffic light junctions to ensure the quickest journey is by bus.

Closer to home, there is a similar, albeit shorter busway that links Luton and Dunstable in Bedfordshire.

Cambridge is a cycling city and has good infrastructure geared to making cycling an attractive, efficient and safe mode of transport. There are large under cover bike parks at the Corn Exchange, one of which we used, plus there is the added convenience of a bike shop on site.

Over half the group went on a guided punting tour on the river Cam with Guy our guide for the trip. Cities always look different from the water; it is a relaxing way to explore.

Ely



The weather was hotter when we rode to Ely. The route is quite difficult in places, although there are dedicated cycle paths alongside the busier main roads. Sadly, it is not a particularly scenic route, but Ely is definitely worth the trip. The cathedral is spectacular and was a welcome break with its cool air compared to the scorching sunshine. The Great Ouse also flows through, and was a good spot for a picnic lunch.

Grafham Water

The final day took us to Grafham Water, the third largest reservoir in the country, that supplies drinking water to Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire. A new bike shop happened to be having its grand opening event so free drinks were on offer and they were great at filling up water bottles. A small group cycled the 10-mile track around the reservoir before heading back home.

Netherlands Cycle Tour 3 to 10 July

Peter Jackson

Twenty-four Spokes members met in Harwich on the Friday and sailed on the 11.00pm Stena Ferry to the Hook of Holland, landing at 8am local time after a very calm crossing of the North Sea. We took the mainly coastal ride to Leiden with a seafront breakfast on the way. We rode in the warm (not hot), dry, mainly headwind free conditions we were to enjoy all week. Near perfect cycling weather for enjoying the wonderful Netherlands cycling infrastructure and culture.

Before we left Leiden on Sunday afternoon we enjoyed the small, beautiful city of Leiden. Our bikes were locked in a huge underground public cycle park, open and attended 24/7. It was packed nearly full, with bikes in two tier racks. Very impressive especially as it is only one of many cycle parks in the city. Sadly, the Sunday morning music barges we enjoyed in 2023 no longer operate. Still, we enjoyed the morning, then rode to Amsterdam. Some went via a direct route and the rest a longer coastal ride via Vandvoort. We did not visit Vandvoort Grand Prix Track which some Members will recall from 2023. At our café stop on the coastal route some enjoyed a North Sea swim; I think the second swim of their holiday.

We were welcomed at the eco friendly Tire Hotel which backed onto the beautiful and very large Vondelpark, a very pleasant walking route through the park to the city centre attractions. Our bikes were booked into a bay in the Hotel's basement car park together with a larger number of other guests' bikes of course. This was the Netherlands after all. During Monday and Tuesday we enjoyed, in separate groups, the attractions of Amsterdam. On the Tuesday most

of us went by differing routes to the beautiful Zaanse Schans Windmill district North of Amsterdam. Some of us enjoyed a locally recommended 24 mile route which included a fascinating self service ferry. Unattended and free to use, the chain ferry which carries a maximum 7 bikes and riders was our way to cross the Knollendammervaart canal.



There were four winding wheels available, two on the barge and one on each bank, to manually propel the barge. A very novel experience.

On Wednesday we rode to our Gouda, Campanile Hotel which, as we knew, “had the builders in”. Difficulties included the promised secure bike storage not being available, bike storage and some of the other issues were resolved. An email from me has resulted in a partial refund. In the evening we enjoyed our holiday group dinner in the De Beren restaurant, about 20 minutes walk from the hotel. Thursday morning most of us went to Gouda Cheese Market, meeting back at the hotel for our luggage to ride to the Hook Of Holland via an enjoyable couple of hours in Delft with the unexpected bonus of a large market in the main square. A good location for present buying.



Then to the Hook, departing from the 10pm ferry for another calm voyage to land 6.30am in Harwich and then home. Much appreciated team work throughout the booking process and the holiday made it a success. Many thanks to all who came and made it such an enjoyable trip.

Watford Cycle Hub Update

You will know from the article in the last edition of Spokes Newsletter that Kate Jenkins and Fiona Timme, founding directors of the Hub, retired from running the community asset after 13 years. Jack Taylor has since been appointed to take over the leadership of the hub as their new manager. Jack writes: Hello, my name is Jack and I am the new manager for the Watford cycle hub. I have been working in the cycle industry for the last 8 years; previously working at Cycles UK in Watford and Giant St. Albans as the workshop manager. Starting this role is super exciting because of the positive impact the hub has for the local and wider community. Everything from the mini



village, learn to ride courses, the café and the cycle shop provide such a great asset to Watford. Some would say its Watford's hidden treasure.

Cycling is a massive part of my life! Anything from road riding, gravel trips and racing MTB. I love it all. I have visited some amazing places on a bike and I strongly believe that cycling is such a great tool for the mind and body. I also like to try the occasional round of golf.

Whether its some advice about your bike or looking for another cycle route in the area, or even if you just want a friendly conversation the team and I are here to help!

See you out there on the trails.

Jack

Spokes Somerset Cycle Way Challenge

Peter Jackson



A challenging two days for ten Spokes members who enjoyed a ride around the recently established Somerset Cycle Way. The actual route is 80 miles, but we did an extra 10 miles as our Hotel was off route in Glastonbury. On Monday 27 July we rode 39 hilly miles, mainly on quiet lanes and a reasonably surfaced cycle path, until we left the cycle way at Somerton to ride the 5 miles to our hotel on a busy

road. Three of the hills that day were challenging enough for my Garmin to show the profile, a mixture of Amber and Red.

Tuesday was a 51-mile ride with five hills worthy of Garmin profiling. Both days were dry and sunny, perhaps a tad cooler would have been nice. A very good route, which all enjoyed, but I suspect even better in cooler weather. The hills revealed some wonderful views at times. The slower pace in Somerset was demonstrated by car drivers often hanging back, until they could pass safely and minimal close passing.





For most of us the train journey home was eventful with delays caused by a landslide and other incidents. The result was ticket refunds for some. There was great company and fun throughout the 2 days including some hilarity for some on delayed trains, judging by the WhatsApp messages.

Watford Borough Council Launch Green Loop Video

Peter Jackson

This Summer, Peter Jackson and Roger Bangs took part in Watford Borough's (WBC) new video, publicising and celebrating the Watford Green Loop. The Green Loop is a successful addition to local cycling infrastructure and improvement is now underway. Click this link to view the video: [Green Loop – www.watford.gov.uk](http://www.watford.gov.uk)

New Ride Leaders always welcome

Steve Ashford

We have a good programme of rides every quarter but will always welcome new ride leaders.

Ride leading is not difficult. No special training or qualifications are required, think instead that you are leading a group of friends around a route that you like. You can choose a route that you know and enjoy, or look at the Rides on the Spokes website (Routes for All). Rides can be any distance, so as leader you get to choose the distance, pace, maximum number of participants and start point. The request for rides email comes out about a month before the start of each quarter. Contact the Rides Co-ordinator (rides@spokesgroup.org.uk) if interested or to get more information.

Spokes Committee

Chair	Peter Jackson	chair@spokesgroup.org.uk
Treasurer	Nigel Pollard	treasurer@spokesgroup.org.uk
Secretary	Vacant	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
Routes Co-ordinator	Gary Smith	routes@spokesgroup.org.uk
Newsletter	Philip Gibbs	newsletter@spokesgroup.org.uk
Web Master	Graham Phillips	webmaster@spokesgroup.org.uk
Publicity	Vacant	publicity@spokesgroup.org.uk
Watford Cycle Hub	To be confirmed	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	
Cychemistry Spokes Ambassador is Katherine Deaney	24 Red Lion Street, Chesham, HP5 1EZ	07954160215 https://cychemistry.co.uk/
Dees Cycles Spokes Ambassador is Katherine Deaney	39 Hill Avenue, Amersham, Bucks, HP6 5BX	01494 727165 https://www.deescycles.com/ info@deescycles.com
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
Leisure Wheels Spokes Ambassador is Katherine Deaney	89 High Street, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire, HP1 3AH	01442 213000 https://www.leisurewheels.co.uk/
Lovelo Cycle Works Spokes Ambassador is Katherine Deaney	Unit 7 Dwight's Yard, r/o, 167 High Street, Berkhamsted HP4 3HB	01442 873000 www.lovelocycleworks.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

Netherlands holiday



Netherlands holiday



Rimini holiday



Rimini holiday



Cambridge holiday



Leading rides – A few notes

Roger Bangs

Spokes rides normally have between six and twenty participants. The ride leader will decide the actual number depending on the nature of the ride. The leader will have cycled with many of the participants before. Often there will be a few new riders who will be welcomed.

If the ride has more than six participants, it is often helpful to have a back marker who will ensure that no one gets left behind. I like to keep the group together if possible, also I like to be able to see the back marker as I then know we are all together.

If there is an incident and the back marker is held back, the leader needs to know what has happened, either by messages being passed forward or by checking, if the back marker is in sight. If I cannot see the back marker, I will slow down or stop the group. Only the leader can control the speed of the group, but the leader is also concentrating on keeping to the intended route whilst trying to ride safely.

In Spokes we use the “Lets Ride” tool for planning our rides; this is helpful for both leaders and participants. All participants on a ride need to book using “Lets Ride”, this controls the number on a ride and gives the leader basic details about the participants. If you are booked onto a ride that you cannot join, please cancel your place, as this will allow another cyclist to join the ride.

Spokes Rides and Events Programme

Autumn 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.

September

Thu 3 Sep 10.00 am – Chorleywood short but sweet
Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Neil**. On road to Chorleywood Simmonds or other café. Some challenging (8-10%) climbing.

12 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sat 5 Sep 10.30 am – River Ouse and University Way to Sandy
Addison Howard Park, Kempston, Bedford MK42 8PN

Ride with **Katherine**. Explore new territory in Bedfordshire. Cycle through Bedford along the river Ouse, then join the University Way (former railway line) to Sandy. Return on quiet lanes through scenic villages. Lunch stop tbc. Note that this ride will only go ahead with a minimum of 4 participants.

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

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Tue 8 Sep 10.00 am – Tuesday Ride to Shenley
Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

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

20 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Wed 9 Sep 10.00 am – Watford – Ice Cream Farm
Watford Rugby Club, Radlett Road WD24 4LL

Ride with **Neil**. Return ride from Watford Rugby Club to Ice Cream Farm near Barnet.

21 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Thur 10 Sep 10.00 am – Boxmoor Off Road Adventures
Outside St Johns Church, Heath Lane, Hemel Hempstead. Free car parking along St John's Road opposite the Steam Coach pub. HP1 1JY

Ride with **Katherine**. Challenging off road ride exploring bridleways, by ways and towpaths around Boxmoor, Bovingdon and Bourne End. Not suitable for beginners. Best suited to MTB or gravel bikes. Coffee at Fishery Wharf Cafe at the end of the ride. Some paths are quite bumpy and some can be overgrown.

12 miles **Slow** MTB or Gravel Bike

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Sat 12 Sep 10.00 am – Lazy Llama
Tasty Bean Café, Oxhey Activity Park, Wigganhall Road, Watford WD18 0HZ

Easy ride with **Roger** on minor roads and tracks to the Lazy Llama café for refreshments.

12 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sat 19 Sep 10.00 am – Outer Watford Loop
Leavesden Country Park, College Road, Watford WD5 0NZ

Ride with **Noel**. Meet in Car Park. Down South Way to Grand Union Canal. Through The Grove woodlands to Whippendell Woods, through to Croxley Green, then down to Ebury Way, past Oxhey Park to North Watford, to Wall Hall. Then across The River Colne, Bricket Wood Scrubs, to Garston Park and return to Leavesden.

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

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On top of the world the peak of Ditchling Beacon
'Over the Top' ride with Paul

Wed 23 Sep 10.30 am – All Around the Ayots

East Lane Car Park, Wheathampstead AL4 8SB

Ride along quiet lanes with **Steve** through pretty mid-Herts countryside via various Ayot villages. Refreshment stop at Emily's in Whitwell and another Ayot on the return. All paved roads, 1500ft of climbing. Alternative start point: Nomansland Common Car Park, Ferrers Lane AL4 8EG at 10:45, which could suit anyone cycling from St. Albans.

26 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Thu 24 Sep 10.00 am – Ashley Green Memorial Café

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Neil**. On roads via Belsize, Flaunden and Leyhill Common. Return generally on slightly NE route.

23 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sat 26 Sep 10.30 am – Oxford – Spokes Members day trip

Thornhill Park and Ride OX3 8DP

Spokes Members only. Join Katherine for a leisurely day out exploring the sights of Oxford. Meet at Thornhill Park and Ride, which is just off the A40 on the edge of the city. Parking is £2.50 from the machine by the terminal building or use Ringo app. We leave the car park to Headington, then Cowley before joining the towpath alongside the river Thames. We then arrive in the centre of the city for coffee and time to explore. We head north along the Oxford canal to Wolvercote for a pub lunch stop. The return route heads back towards the city centre then out via residential roads back to the car park. Expect to be out for most of the day.

19 miles Medium Any bike



Nicky Line to Harpenden with Katherine

October

Thu 1 Oct 10.00 am – Chenies Garden Centre

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Neil**. On roads via Belsize, Flaunden and Chenies to Chenies GC for refreshment. Some challenging (8-10%) climbing.

19 miles Medium Any bike

Sun 4 Oct10.00 am – Black Lake

Cassiobury Park Car Park WD18 7LG

Ride with **Noel**. To Rickmansworth and Denham to Pinewood Studios. Return via Langley Park Country Park, Iver, then along some parts of The Grand Union Canal to Rickmansworth and Ebury Way

42 milesMediumAny bike (not skinny tyres)

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Tue 6 Oct10.00 am – Great Missenden

Aquadrome Café, Rickmansworth WD3 1NB

Ride with **Roger**. Cycle on roads and lanes though Chesham to Great Missenden for refreshments. Return though Holmer Green and Chalfont St. Giles.

35 milesMediumAny bike

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Wed 7 Oct10.00 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 milesFastAny bike

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Chiltern Velo ride with Paul

Watford Rugby Club, Radlett Road WD24 4LL

21 miles **Medium** Any bike

32 miles **Medium** Any bike

31 miles **Medium** Any bike

32 miles **Fast** Any bike

Wed 14 Oct 10.00 am – Ashley Green Memorial Café
Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Neil**. On roads via Belsize, Flaunden and Leyhill Common. Return generally on slightly NE route.

23 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sun 18 Oct 10.00 am – Ebury Way Maintenance
On Ebury Way, near the Post Office van site WD18 8FQ

Help **Roger**. Bring saws and cutters, to remove branches and vegetation obstructing the path. Other minor tidying up work.

1 mile **Slow** Any bike

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Councillor Stephen Giles-Medhurst on the pedal powered smoothie maker at Woodoaks Farm

Wed 21 Oct 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

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Thu 22 Oct 10.00 am – Chorleywood short but steep

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Neil**. On road to Chorleywood Simmonds or other café. Some challenging (8-10%) climbing.

12 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sun 25 Oct 10.00 am – Making Tracks to Stockwood Park

**Dacorum Activity Hub, Redbourn Road, Hemel. Free Parking
(height barrier at entrance) HP2 7BA**

Ride with **Katherine**. Follow former railway paths through Redbourn, Harpenden and north to Luton. Stop at Stockwood Park for refreshments, before heading back via Markyate and Gaddesden Row. Some challenging hills, not suitable for beginners.

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

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Tue 27 Oct 10.00 am – Flourish Bakery

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Phil**. Off road Ebury Way, part of Abbey Way, then quiet roads to North Watford and return.

14 miles **Slow to Medium** Any bike (not skinny tyres)

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Wed 28 Oct 10.00 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 29 Oct 10.00 am – Sunnyside Ride

Cassiobury Park Car Park, Gade Avenue, Watford WD18 7LG

Ride with **Steve**. Out via Sarratt and Bovingdon to Hemel for refreshment at Sunnyside Café. Return via a bit of Grand Union Canal and Bedmond.

2 m3iles

Medium

Any bike

.....



The Cambridge holiday group at Ely Cathedral

November

Tue 3 Nov 10.00 am – Cassiobury Park

Café in the Park, Rickmansworth Aquadrome WD3 1NB

Ride with **Phil**. A medium ride on the Ebury Way to Cassiobury Park. Return via Croxley Green.

12 miles

Medium

Any bike

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Thu 5 Nov 10.00 am – Chenies Garden Centre

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Neil**. On roads via Belsize, Flaunden and Chenies to Chenies GC for refreshment. Some challenging (8-10%) climbing.

19 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Tue 10 Nov 10.00 am – Tuesday Ride to Chipperfield

Aquadrome Café, Rickmansworth WD3 1NB

Ride with **Roger**. Cycle though Heronsgate to Flaunden and the Chiltern lanes stopping at Chipperfield for refreshments.

20 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Wed 11 Nov 10.00 am – Chorleywood short but steep

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

Ride with **Neil**. On road to Chorleywood Simmonds or other café. Some challenging (8-10%) climbing.

12 miles **Medium** Any bike

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Sun 15 Nov 10.00 am – De Havilland Café

Radlett Road Rugby Club WD24 4LL

Ride with **Noel**. Out via Wall Hall, Shenleybury to De Havilland Café. Back via Willows and Lakes, Colney Heath to Alban Way then Chiswell Green to Bricket Wood

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

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- Tue 17 Nov 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

- Wed 18 Nov 10.00 am – Burston’s Garden Centre**
Outside Leverstock Green Library, Hemel Hempstead HP3 8QG
- Ride with **Katherine.** Head out via Potters Crouch to the garden centre at Chiswell Green. Easy going ride, suitable for beginners.
- 11 miles **Slow** Any bike

- Thu 19 Nov 7.30pm – Committee Meeting**
Watford Cycle Hub, Chaffinch Lane, Watford WD18 9QD
- All Members welcome to attend our Committee Meetings.

- Tue 24 Nov 10.00 am – Chorleywood short but steep**
Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX
- Ride with **Neil.** On road to Chorleywood Simmonds or other café. Some challenging (8-10%) climbing.
- 12 miles **Medium** Any bike

- Wed 25 Nov 10.00 am – Chenies Garden Centre**
Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX
- Ride with **Neil.** On roads via Belsize, Flaunden and Chenies to Chenies GC for refreshment. Some challenging (8-10%) climbing.
- 19 miles **Medium** Any bike

Thu 26 Nov 10.00 am – Harpenden and Nicky Line

Vue Cinema, Watford WD25 7JZ

Ride with **Noel**. Out via St. Albans to Harpenden for Coffee. Then via Nicky Line to Redbourn, Hemel Hempstead to pick up The Grand Union Canal and return to Watford Via Warner Bros Studio Way

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

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Sat 28 Nov 10.00 am – Shenley

Harvester, Baldwins Lane, Croxley WD3 3RX

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

20 miles **Medium** Any bike

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2027 Spokes Members Cycling Holidays

We are already in the process of planning the holidays to be offered to current Spokes members in 2027. Here are the plans in progress so you can think about your preferences before the holidays are advertised and booking opens. Experience tells us that you need to book early in the booking period to ensure a place on one of our increasingly popular holidays. All holidays are open only to current Spokes’ members.

Constable Country – Suffolk / Essex borders

From 11 to 14 May 2027 Katherine Deaney is offering a 3-night UK based holiday around Dedham Vale. Booking will open 1 December 2026 and close 15 December or sooner if capacity is reached

Spain

Helen Duckworth is offering a one-week Spanish cycling hotel holiday arriving Girona on 21 May and returning on 28 May 2027. Bike hire available at the Mas Pelegri Hotel, Girona where the holiday will be based. Final details will be emailed to all members by 10 September; booking will open on 14 September and close on 2 October 2026.

More Spokes rides from this summer



1

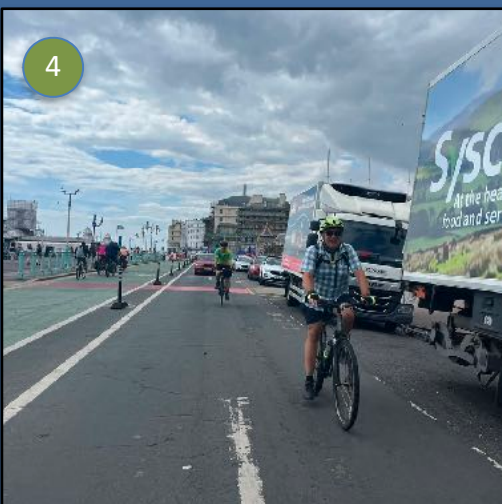


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3

1. Cheslyn Gardens with Phil
2. Red Lion Chenies ride with Chris
3. Chipperfield ride with Chris
4. 'Over the top' ride from London to Brighton with Paul
5. Chiltern Velo Café with Paul



4



5

bike registration

advice

social rides

maps

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