

SUMMER EVENTS 2003

Rides coordinator: Austin Cassidy 01227 280135

SUNDAY 1 JUNE
NEWINGTON STATION 10.30AM FOR NEWINGTON STOCKBURY RIDE
 Nigel, Nick & Keith will lead you on a 17 mile circular ride from Newington using part of NCR1 with short off road sections suitable for touring bikes. Lunch at a pub at Stockbury. Details Keith 01795 421414 or Nigel 01795 475399

SUNDAY 1 JUNE 7AM AND 10AM
LES BELLES D'EUROPE RIDES 2003
WHITE CLIFFS CHALLENGE
 East Kent CTC presents a choice of three rides. Choose 25miles, 100km or 100 miles. Ride at your own pace. The rides will be marked with arrows and there is an entry fee of between £3 and £6. French and Belgian riders will be joining this ride. This is the first in the series of rides during the summer of "Les belles d'Europe" with other rides in Calais, St Omer, etc. Details see East Kent CTC website www.eastkentctc.org.uk or phone Lorna 01304 832492. There are another five Belles d'Europe rides on Sunday 8 June 832492. Saturday 21 June St Hubert, Sunday 7 September St Omer and Sunday 28 September Mouscron. Details from Lorna 01304 832492. It may be possible to arrange car sharing.

SUNDAY 8 JUNE 2PM
CYCLING FOR HEALTH
 As part of British Heart Week why not try a flat, easy and gentle bike ride on the beautiful Romney Marsh lanes. This route is part of the Romney Marsh Meanders cycle pack. Donation appreciated. LEADER: Andy Morris, RMCP (01797 367934). MEET: Mittells newsgents, High Street, Lydd (TR 043 209). DISTANCE: 14 miles (3 hours).

SPOKES holds regular rides **S** on the first Sunday of most months. Everyone is welcome, including non-members. Children under 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult.

- We aim to integrate bikes and trains by starting and finishing our rides at or near railway stations.
- We have taken every care to ensure that ride details given here are correct at time of printing but you may wish to check with the leader by phoning before travelling.
- You are advised to wear protective equipment, such as a cycle helmet, and wear warm clothing in cold weather. On longer rides, there will usually be refreshment stops but please bring a drink and some food with you. You should ensure your bike is in a safe, roadworthy condition before setting out.
- SPOKES and its members accept no liability for any accident or loss - please note that you attend a cycle ride at your own risk.
- Details of East Kent CTC rides from Lorna on 01304 832492, South Kent CTC, from Mick on 01233 625414.
- Kent section Veteran Cycle Club rides, contact Dave on 01892 722584.
- For East Kent Cycling Club rides contact Jack Cole on 01843 592577.
- White Cliffs and Romney Marsh Countryside Projects regularly organise cycle rides throughout South Kent. Call 01304 241806 or 01303 274806 for details and ask for a comprehensive guided walks leaflet.

SUNDAY 13 JULY 10AM
CYCLE RIDE: A CIRCLE OF MARSH CHURCHES
 A long, but pleasant bike ride across the Romney Marsh, enjoying the distinctive Marsh wildlife en route. This is one of the routes in the Romney Marsh Meanders cycle pack. Donation appreciated. LEADER: Andy Morris, RMCP (01797 367934). MEET: Hamstreet Railway Station, Hamstreet (TR 001 338). DISTANCE: 25 miles (6 hours).

SUNDAY 29 JUNE
MEET 10AM ASHFORD DOMESTIC RAILWAY STATION
 30-40 mile circular ride with pub lunch. Leader Jason Wood 01227 740478

SATURDAY 5 JULY 12pm OR 3pm
RHINO CYCLE CHALLENGE 2003
 Start Port Lympne 20 mile start 3pm or 70 mile ride start 12noon. The rhino ride is back, bigger and better! Start and finish at Port Lympne Wild Animal Park, home to some of the world's rarest and endangered animals including the highly endangered black rhino. Fantastic prizes including a holiday for the highest fundraiser. Evening entertainment, bands, disco and fireworks. Details Dee 01303 264647 or deer@howlettts.net

TUESDAY 15 JULY
AUTUMN NEWSLETTER MATERIAL DEADLINE
 Articles welcome. Copy to Editor Sam Webb 01227 738296

MONDAY 9 JUNE
SPOKES COMMITTEE MEETING WHITSTABLE
 To be held in the upstairs room of the Royal British Legion in Oxford Street, Whitstable. Local members particularly welcome to attend and raise any cycling issues with SPOKES committee members.

SUNDAY 15 JUNE 10AM - 2PM
SHEPWAY 2003 CYCLETHON
 On the first day of National Bike Week Shepway District Council and the Romney Marsh Countryside Project will cycle the National Cycle Route 2 across the Romney Marsh by cycling from New Romney in a big circle around the Marsh. There will be stops at Lathie Barn tea rooms before arriving back at New Romney. As usual there will be a FREE T-SHIRT, plus a FREE barbecue at the end. We will start at both of these places with a leader so join in the fun and don't worry there will be transport back if you get tired. StMartins Field, New Romney 10.00 am or Lathie Barn Tea Rooms, Burnmarsh 11.30 pm

NATIONAL BIKE WEEK 14-22 JUNE
SATURDAY 21 JUNE
THE BIG WHEEL OF KENT RIDE
 Choose your spoke of the Big Wheel. A dozen routes all converging on Canterbury where a big celebration with refreshments will be held at the House of Agnes in St Dunstan's Street Canterbury. Typical rides from Rochester, Maidstone, Ashford, Folkestone, Dover to Canterbury etc. There will be a leg from St Omer to Canterbury, which will join with the Dover to Canterbury riders. Details James McGowan 01634 854146 or email cathy@lovesmacc.freezeserve.co.uk Booking £3 or £4 on the day.

THURSDAY 19 JUNE 7PM FOR 7.30PM
CANTERBURY ENVIRONMENT CENTRE, ST ALPHEGE LANE, CANTERBURY
 A talk on cycling by Judge Nigel Van Der Bijl. Refreshments afterwards.

SUNDAY 22 JUNE 12.30PM FOR 1pm
BEACH BARBECUE, TANKERTON
 Jean Bomber invites SPOKES members to a barbie at her beach hut on Tankerton Prom - but no 13, nr Pier Avenue. BYO food and drink, shops nearby.

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FRIDAY 18 JULY 7.30PM
SPOKES COMMITTEE MEETING ST ALPHEGE CANTERBURY
 Canterbury Environment Centre

SUNDAY 27 JULY 10AM FOR 10.30AM DEPARTURE
25 MILE INLAND CIRCULAR RIDE
 Meet at seafrost cafe by Cook's Stores, Tankerton, grid ref 127673. Lunch stop at Brogdale Apple Centre, Faversham, or byo Led by Jean Bomber.

FRIDAY 8 AUGUST 2 PM
A CREAM TEA PEDAL (GREEN GANG)
 Come out on a bike ride on the Romney Marsh. The lanes are flat and quiet and you can enjoy the refreshments afterwards at Lathie Barn tea rooms. Donation appreciated. LEADER: Andy Morris, RMCP (01797 367934). MEET: Lathie Barn tea rooms, Donkey Street, Burnmarsh (TR 108 324). DISTANCE: 12 miles (2.5 hours).

THURSDAY 21 AUGUST 7.30PM
SPOKES COMMITTEE MEETING DOVER
 Details John Shirley 01304 210010

SATURDAY 13 SEPTEMBER
FRIENDS OF KENT CHURCHES BIKE RIDE
 SPOKES supports this event to raise funds for local churches and the Friends of Kent Churches. Plan your own route to visit as many churches as you like. Details: please contact the event co-ordinator Dr Muriel Hall 01732 842549.

SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 10AM
MEET AT CANTERBURY WEST STATION GOODS SHED
 A 25 mile circular ride arranged in conjunction with Canterbury City Council & English Heritage with visits to the Belvedere Chapel, England's smallest chapel, the Gab & Winkle Tunnel, Herne Bay Bandstand, Reculver Towers, Barmes Wallis's house and England's smallest Town Hall at Fordwich returning to Canterbury via NCR1. Details Sam Webb 01227 738296.

SUNDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
IN TOWN WITHOUT MY CAR! CAR FREE DAY
 www.22september.org and www.itwmc.gov.uk

TUESDAY 23-FRIDAY 26 SEPTEMBER
VELO CITY CONFERENCE PARIS 2003
 The theme of this year's conference is: *The bicycle is a tool for winning the city back.* www.velo-city2003.com email velocity2003@mairie-paris.fr

MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
MONDAY WITHOUT MY CAR! CAR FREE DAY
 www.22september.org and www.itwmc.gov.uk

SUNDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2PM
JANE AUSTEN BIKE RIDE
 Cycle to Staple and Goodnestone on the back roads. Donation appreciated. LEADER: Richard Frost (01304 375614). MEET: Village car park, Eastry, near Sandwich (TR 311 548). DISTANCE: 16 miles (3 hours).

MONDAY 22 SEPTEMBER
IN TOWN WITHOUT MY CAR! CAR FREE DAY
 www.22september.org and www.itwmc.gov.uk

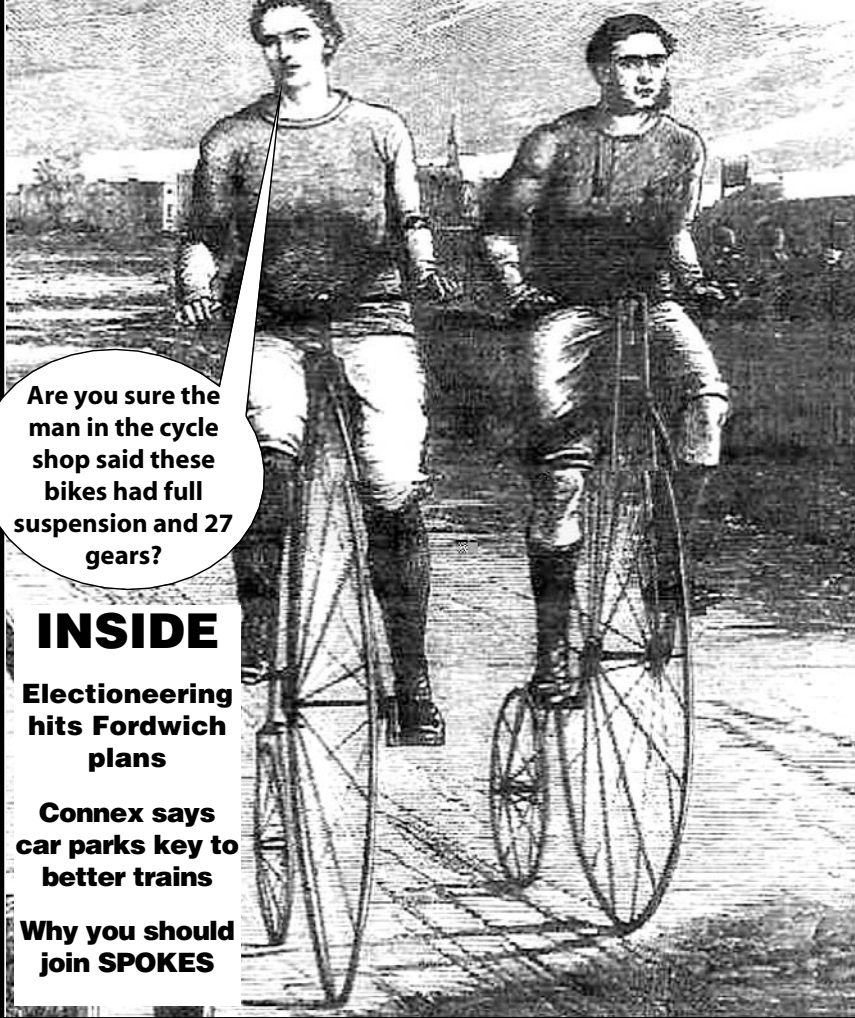
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More Rides with CTC
 EAST Kent CTC would like to encourage new members to join their Sunday Runs. Rides leave at 10.00am to reach a different destination each week, always a friendly country pub where we have lunch. The group is made up from people from Thanet, Deal, Dover, Canterbury and Herne Bay so there is usually someone to cycle home with. We cycle at the pace of the slowest rider.

Tandems, racing and touring bikes are the most suitable. We are a sociable group and will make you feel welcome! For details of the rides either phone the runs secretary Lorna Stanley on 01304 832492 or see our website on www.eastkentctc.org.uk

SPOKES

www.spokeseastkent.org.uk ISSUE 36 SUMMER 2003



Are you sure the man in the cycle shop said these bikes had full suspension and 27 gears?

- INSIDE**
- Electioneering hits Fordwich plans
 - Connex says car parks key to better trains
 - Why you should join SPOKES

SPOKES was formed in 1994 to campaign for better cycling facilities in East Kent. SPOKES works closely with Sustrans, Kent County Council, district and parish councils. SPOKES is affiliated to the Cyclists' Touring Club, the Cycle Campaign Network and Euro-Regio Velo.

Now it's Kaddy the mountain slayer!

Keen cyclist Kaddy Lee-Preston, better known to most people as the Weather Woman on BBC TV South East should perhaps be renamed Wonder Woman after her latest cycling trip in Mexico.

She sent the following email to Spokes: "Just got back from my recent cycling challenge across Mexico! Yikes! The hardest thing I've ever done! 612km in 8 days, climbing 28,000 feet in total - all on a mountain bike! Geepers! - that's like doing Everest by bike!

"It really was tough and only about 12 (out of 60) made the whole thing without getting in the van at some point-and before you ask, no I didn't get in the van! I was so much fitter than for the one I did last year in Ecuador so I really did get the most out of it and I made some amazing new friends.

"The people were really fantastic and at times when our muscles wanted to give in everyone else was there to help us through it. It was such an amazing trip. Even eight days camping without any showers, or even a loo, didn't seem to bother me this time!

"One of the days involved a 61km climb-yes ALL up hill, it took me 10 hours to do, with no proper stops, just the van stopping by to give you water, bananas and sandwiches!! It was so hard. It just went on and on forever! And the temperature was 42C at times (106F), in blazing hot sunshine!

"Phew! It's the longest cycle track uphill in the world!!! I felt sooooo good when I got to the top though!!! Best thing I've ever done. Mexico is such a beautiful country, I'd recommend anyone going there - but leave the bike at home!!"

Somehow it makes our 1996 ride up Gospel Pass on the Millennium Ride look like something for wimps!

More articles can be found on www.spokeseastkent.org.uk Some of the items included in this issue have been edited to fit our limited space. For the full versions, please log on to the web site.

Reflective Snap Bands - two for £4.00!
 Wear a SPOKES hi-vis yellow safety waistcoat. A bargain at £10 each.
 Order by phoning 01227 738296. A full range of sizes on offer.

Contacting SPOKES

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Find us on the internet at www.spokeseastkent.org.uk

Now's the time to be a SPOKESperson!

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Annual membership - please tick relevant box
 Individual adult £4 Family/household £6
 Senior citizens/unwaged/under 16 £3

Please make cheques payable to SPOKES and send to the address overleaf. **SUM03**

Join SPOKES and make our voice louder

SPOKES, an entirely voluntarily run organisation, relies on its financial support from its members. We are now in our ninth year.

Each year we print four newsletters. Every issue is a print run of 2,500 sometimes 3,500, representing nearly 100,000 newsletters over the nine years. Many of these are distributed free through various outlets such as bike shops, TICs, pubs, cafes etc.

We also supply public libraries and send copies to councillors, officers and MPs. In this way we reach potential new members. What have we achieved since 1994?

- Spokes has played a major part in the development of the National Cycle Network (NCN) and was instrumental in routing National Route 1 from Inverness to Dover through the area with National Route 18 from east to west crossing in Canterbury.

- Spokes members, including their children, rode both of Sustrans Trailblazing Millennium Rides from Inverness to Dover in 1995 (1200 miles) and Belfast to Land's End in 1996 (1,000 miles).

- Spokes surveyed, designed and helped build a number of routes in the district. Among them is the 1996 Regional Route 16 from Canterbury to Dover. This was the first signed Regional Route in the UK and was closely followed by the opening of Regional Route 17 from Canterbury to the Channel Tunnel with a spur down the valley to Dover in 1997.

- The NCR1 from Canterbury to Fordwich was planned and built by Spokes members at a Sustran's work camp. Spokes initiated the opening up of the Crab & Winkle NCR1 from Whitstable to Canterbury. Both of these are off road and ideal routes if you want to learn to ride again or teach your children to ride in safety.

- Thanks to the hard work put in by Spokes there is now provision for cyclists to use the Channel Tunnel. Spokes were in the very first group of cyclists to use this facility when they took part in the inaugural crossing.

- Spokes was among the first cycling groups in the UK to have their own website which is linked to the Canterbury City Council and Kent County Council websites. It has a list of all the bike shops in Kent with details of their hire and repair services, B&Bs, campsites and a list of all the free cycling maps from KCC.

- Spokes members have attended every international Velo City Conference since 1995 Basle, 1997 Barcelona, 1999 Graz & Maribor, 2001 Edinburgh & Glasgow. This year it is being held in Paris.

- Spokes joined forces with the Environmental Transport Association to bring Car Free Day to the UK.

- Spokes is involved in a number of county wide initiatives including the redevelopment of Alysham and the reuse of the Betteshanger spoil heap, getting more bikes on trains with ConnexSE, the provision of safe cycle parking both at stations and in towns and the draft Canterbury District Walking & Cycling Strategy 2003.

- Spokes is a group member of the YHA. If 5 or more Spokes members want to make a trip there are discounts to be had with our card both in the UK and abroad.

How do we finance ourselves? Spokes delivers the newsletter to its members. It is from these subs that we make ends meet. So if you want to join us, welcome, and if you are in arrears get your cheque books out. Details are at the bottom right of the page. Remember Spokes needs you!

SAM WEBB

Velocipede's early origins in Kent

The Science Museum in London houses many remarkable exhibits but perhaps none more so than Willard Sawyer's four wheeled velocipede on which he cycled from London to Brighton and back, taking two days for each journey.

Based in Chapel Street, Dover, Sawyer was a carpenter who became internationally known in the nineteenth century as the first truly professional maker of a man powered vehicle. He set up business in 1838, the year after Queen Victoria came to the throne.

So successful was Sawyer that within three years he opened workshops in St James' Street. This was the world's first mass-production cycle factory, marked on the 1858/60 OS map as 'Velocipede Manufactory'. Sawyer was the first to market his product nationally and to establish a brand name.

His velocipedes were shown at the Great Exhibition in Hyde Park in 1851 and then travelled across the Atlantic to be shown at the Great Exhibition in New York in 1854. Prices ranged from £15 to £40. There was a lightweight racer, a carriage for ladies, another for invalids and a scaled down version for children. The Park Sociable carried a family of six!

In 1868 the Penny Farthing arrived. It was swish, smart and fast and overtook the velocipede in more ways than one. Sawyer's factory in Dover closed when he moved to Deal where he hired his machines out to holidaymakers to ride up and down the prom and local car free roads. After 50 years Sawyer sold up. Only three of these remarkable machines still exist.

Vote-catching sidelines Fordwich safety

It is with deep regret that we have to report the loss of one of our campaigns, (writes Martin Farbrother). All seemed fine until regrettably it appears the local elections got in the way. Sad though it may seem, votes appear to be more important than the well being of cyclists.

It has long been considered by many people, including Kent County Council and our own Canterbury Council that Well Lane in Fordwich should be a no through road to anything but cyclists, horseriders and pedestrians. This is for reasons of safety. It is narrow, enclosed with blind corners. It is for these reasons that many motorists choose to speed up it. This causes severe danger to more vulnerable users. There is a perfectly suitable alternative for motorists, that of Mote Lane but to some a rat run is preferred.

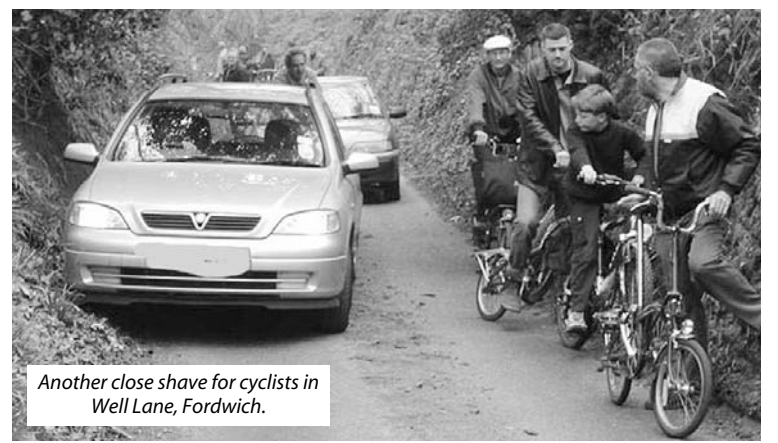
Such is the level of concern by the aforementioned councils that Well Lane

is mentioned in the new Canterbury Walking and Cycling Strategy. Appendix 5, Programmed Rural Schemes 2002/3: "Closure of Well Lane will enable local pedestrians and cyclists to use this narrow, country road without the danger of traffic."

Spokes has been campaigning for the closure for two years and finally on safety grounds, subject to funding the City Council agreed to an experimental closure. Well readers the money is now available but it seems now, because of a few local councillors' concerns it won't happen. No consultation, no site meeting. Is this right?

This lane is part of Route 1 of the National Cycle Network. It is an important link with the Canterbury to Fordwich Route, which the City Council wholeheartedly supported. Where is that support now?

An experiment must be conducted,



Another close shave for cyclists in Well Lane, Fordwich.

how else will anyone know if it will work? Please help us to raise it at full council by writing in support to: The Highways Department,

Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury or email highways@canterbury.gov.uk Thanks in anticipation for your support.

Crab & Winkle – signs shortage points to disaster

In April a party set out from Canterbury to cycle to Whitstable to show the Crab & Winkle route to a Times journalist writing a piece as a curtain raiser for our anniversary ride Saturday 3 May.

Spokes hears many complaints from people who are attracted to the route but cannot find it! However, our journalist was an independent and expert witness to the adequacy of signing.

He has written about famous cycle routes in Australia, America, Europe and recently in Suffolk where he said the signs were excellent. His judgement is based on wide experience. When asked, how he would grade the quality of signing out of ten he generously awarded it one out of 10!

This is a great shame. If we include the Invicta Way, the bridge over the new Thanet Way, the recent surfacing of the main section and the commissioning of various works of art en route, then we are talking about a lot of money being spent in recent years.

Tourist usage is already significant (information from hotels and accommodation providers in Canterbury) but the route won't reach full potential if the route remains hidden. Just imagine if the Cathedral could not be found?

People hear about this famous route (the first regular steam passenger railway in the world, opened 3May 1830) and come from far and wide, only to be frustrated because they cannot find it!

Our journalist friend was only happy to promote the route for 3 May because it will be a guided ride on that day. At other times he feared people might not find it or could even get lost.

Please can we have signs that actually say Crab & Winkle so cyclists know where it begins and ends?"

ROBIN TOWNSEND



Flashback to fun in the woods at last year's C&W celebration

Thanet tandem service seeks blind cyclists

Following the 1981 Year of the Disabled, there was a group of cyclists in Canterbury who rode tandems with stokers (on the back) who were visually impaired or otherwise unable to cycle alone.

As well as regular outings we did sponsored rides and took part several times in the BOLD (BLIND Outdoor Leisure Development) marathon at Spalding. But as our jobs and family lives changed, the group dispersed.

Now, in Thanet, the East Kent Cycling Club has obtained a grant and bought two tandems for riding with blind stokers. They are looking for visually

impaired riders who would like to go out, for an hour or two, in Thanet. They would be picked up from home, and it's free. If you know of someone interested please put them in touch. EKCC would also welcome reserve front riders, for when their regular pilots are on holiday. Please contact Jack Cole on 01843 592577.

Jack Cole has had responses from people in East Kent too far from Thanet to join in his rides. Could we revive tandem riding around Canterbury?

Kent Rural Disability Sportslink staff is interested in helping with funds and advice. Anyone interested please contact Beatrice Shire on 01227 766782.

Closing stations will improve trains – says Connex!

In a recent announcement the French head of Connex SE gave out the following priceless piece of information. "We need to shut more stations. We cannot increase the numbers of trains any further without more and bigger car parks," he said.

It has yet to dawn on the powers that be who run Connex SE that once someone gets in their car and has to drive any distance they will stay in their car until they have finished the journey. This will lead to more and more

congestion around stations in major towns such as Canterbury and Ashford if smaller stations are closed.

What Connex SE should be doing is encouraging more people to travel by train by providing better, not worse, services. Many commuters want to take their bikes on trains in this area. They use them for cycling to the stations and then to work when they get to the other end. This cuts down on car use, pollution and congestion.

Children delight at veteran bikes (and bikers!)

The Museum of Canterbury wheeled out two prize exhibits in March for the Science Week Road Show – an 1840s Boneshaker and an 1870s Penny Farthing on the Spokes stand manned by John Hunt and Sam Webb.

Children were delighted to be wheeled around on the veteran bikes high above their parent's heads. Also on show was a lightweight 531 double-butted frame

made by Bill Hurlow of Herne Bay, one of the greatest frame makers of all time, a trusty well used Brompton and bike memorabilia from the archives.

Visitors to the stand ranged from the very young to the very old who told of rides on fixed wheeled bikes from London. Spokes member Robin Townsend showed off the Invicta steam engine.

All change at East station

Cyclists riding to Canterbury East Station from Wincheap roundabout have often commented on the contra flow cycle path on the right hand side, which is always full of parked cars even though they are parked on double yellow lines. All this is to change.

From this summer the city council will be using the forecourt in front of the station as an off loading point for coaches coming to the city. As a spin off from this it

will take over the parking regulations and unlike the British Transport Police, the council's parking attendants will be eager to ticket illegally parked cars.

So if you are one of those naughty motorists who have parked there illegally in the past your time is now up and the contra flow cycling path can soon be given back to its rightful use.

So it seems all those phone calls to the council, chats with officers and councillors have paid off.

Draft cycling, walking strategy unveiled

Canterbury City Council launched the first draft of its cycling and walking strategy for public consultation in April.

Key priorities are to improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, mobility impaired people and wheelchair users to encourage walking and cycling as part of an integrated transport strategy.

It focuses on the needs of those travelling to work, college, school, shops or other amenities and to help reduce car dependency.

The objects are to:

- Implement an identified network of safer walking and cycling routes
- Increase accessibility for the mobility impaired
- Increase walking and cycling to schools
- Reduce conflict between cyclists, pedestrians and other traffic
- Provide additional cycle parking facilities
- Increase accessibility for pedestrian and cyclist visitors
- Increase walking and cycling for health
- Increase value for money of footway maintenance and small improvement schemes that are programmed for construction
- Increase walking and cycling for commuters, for recreational purposes by recreating joined up rural networks and ensure that all new developments are cycle and pedestrian friendly
- Promote awareness and publicity of the benefits of walking and cycling, including codes of practice for considerate behaviour

One of the welcome additions to this plan is the missing link in the local cycle network, from Chartham to Canterbury NCR18 along the River Stour. Since the closure of the St Augustine's Hospital over 600 new houses have been added to Chartham.

This route would provide a much safer route than using the A28. It will encourage children to cycle to school in Canterbury, commuters both to and from Chartham and link with the signed route to Ashford. It will also be a great boost to tourism in the area.

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Spokes needs your support

If you would like to join Spokes, please complete the form overleaf and send it with your subscription to:

SPOKES, The Canterbury Environment Centre, St Alphege Lane, Canterbury CT1 2EB Tel 01227 457009.

The centre is open Tuesday to Saturday 10.30am to 4.30pm. Good food, drink and lots of useful resources and information.