

All East Kent CTC rides start from Woodlands Farm Café, Adisham, on Regional Route 16 (TR22536) at 10am every Sunday. Details from East Kent CTC runs secretary Colin Weaver 01227 740478. <http://www.eastkentctc.org.uk/>

Sunday February 4th
Meet at Canterbury West station at 10.30 am to ride to Lord Whiskey cafe for lunch. A gentle ride along one valley there and another one back. Details John Hunt 01227 769035

Sunday January 8th:
Meet at Sturry station at 10.30 am to ride to Preston for lunch at The Half Moon & Seven Stars. Same short route back to complete in daylight. Details Andy McNally 01227 713285

2007

Sunday December 3rd
Christmas Celebration Lunch at the Red Lion Dunkirk After a ride round Blean or Chilham (depending on wind direction!). Start at Canterbury West Station at 10.30 am. A short ride back along the old A2 and cycle track after the meal. Details: A rough idea of numbers would be useful to inform the pub, so please let us know a few days before - hand if you can! Contact Beatrice Shire (01227 766782) or John Hunt (01227 769035)

Sunday November 5th Gunpowder Mills Faversham.
Meet at Whitstable Station, South side, 10.30am. A mainly flat ride. Pub lunch or bring your own. Return to Whitstable or take the train. Details Ian Rogers - 01227 733792

Sunday November 3rd
Join the biggest event of the year. All day in London. Timetable: There are a number of events including a bike ride from Lincoln's Inn Field at 10am and a Mass Gathering in Trafalgar Square from 1.45pm onwards. See further <http://www.campaigncc.org/> and main website: www.county.org.uk Spokes will go on 8.33 from Canterbury West. Details 01227 738296.

Saturday 4th November
"Stop Climate Chaos" Join the biggest event of the year. All day in London. Timetable: There are a number of events including a bike ride from Lincoln's Inn Field at 10am and a Mass Gathering in Trafalgar Square from 1.45pm onwards. See further <http://www.campaigncc.org/> and main website: www.county.org.uk Spokes will go on 8.33 from Canterbury West. Details 01227 738296.

AUTUMN & SPRING EVENTS 2006/07

Coordinator Beatrice Shire, 01227 766782
Special offer for £10 - join SPOKES, come on a ride and get a half price hi-viz jacket

SPOKES holds regular rides 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 South Kent CTC rides 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 01797 367934 for details and ask for a comprehensive guided walks leaflet.

Further rides on the web: www.spokeeastkent.org.uk

Sunday April 15th
London. Explore the Lea Valley, the site of the 2012 Olympic Village from Greenwich along NCR1. Meet at the Blackheath entrance to Greenwich Park in Charlton Way where you can park for free on a Sunday. TfL Maps 11, 5 & 2 available free from www.tfl.gov.uk and the Sustrans Lea Valley Map London Docklands and the Lea Valley www.sustrans.org.uk 0845 13 00 65. Details Sam Webb 01227 738296

Sunday April 1st
Join a unique event to mark the launch of the new Miner's Way Trail. Spokes will lead a 30 mile cycle ride on the Miner's Way Cycle Route, while the White Cliffs Countryside Project will lead a walk on the Miner's Way Walking Trail. Meet Aylesham Community Project, Ackholt Road Aylesham (TR 242523).

Sunday March 4th
Meet at Herne Bay station at 10.30 am to ride to the Gate Inn at Marshside, including cycle crossings of the Thanet Way and (weather permitting) showing the proposed new route connecting Herne Bay and Reculver. Details Beatrice Shire 01227 766782

Thanks Nick!
Spokes would like to extend a huge vote of thanks to Nick Evans who has designed the Spokes newsletter since 1998. Nick was responsible for the design of the newsletter we now use. I'm not quite sure how we are going to follow such a high standard, but if there is anyone out there with desktop publishing skills please contact the editor. WS

Enjoying the leafy lanes of Suffolk

Earlier this year, Spokes member Mick Richie organised a great weekend cycling the Suffolk coastal cycle route. Eight cyclists met up late on a Friday afternoon at a B&B in Wenhaston, near Halesworth and enjoyed an evening meal together. The following day, in perfect weather, we followed the cycle route through lovely country lanes to Framlingham, stopping for lunch near Framlingham Castle. Some opted for a walk around the town's market, others had a pub lunch. From there, we continued to Woodbridge sheltering from a thunderstorm in a barn left open by an obliging farmer. Once the storm had passed over, we cycled on to Woodbridge and arrived just in time to visit the interesting Tide Mill by the River Deben, before booking into the old Station House for the night. The next day we cycled on to Orford, crossing the River Deben on a small motor ferry boat. Later in the afternoon, we used another ferry - this time one man rowed two cyclists across at a time with their bikes. On our last day, we cycled to Dunwich, a thriving seaport in medieval times. The sitting of the town on sand cliffs had made it a victim of coastal erosion and now almost the entire town has slipped into the sea, leaving only a small village around what was the western fringe of the town. We had the famous fish & chip lunch, visited the Dunwich Museum, and from there started our homeward journey. Six of the group cycled back to Wenhaston. Two, who had travelled to Suffolk by train left the group to cycle to Darsham station for the train to Liverpool Street. It was a great weekend cycling in quiet country lanes with hedgerows full of gorse and cowslips, sometimes cycling through nature reserves, where permitted. Mick and Mary organised everything so well. They have now moved to Woodbridge, and have been discovering more of the area. Mick would be happy to arrange other weekends if enough people are interested. EB

Disjointed cycle routes and problems of legal cycling

Since the case of a cyclist being convicted of obstruction for riding on a road with a solid white line in the middle, and a cycle track on the far side, cyclists are often left wondering where they should ride.

Palmars Cross Hill has a double white line in the middle, and not enough space for cars to pass cycles on the way up. But there's no cycle path, only a footway on the downhill side of the road. Rheims Way has a cycle path beside it, but depending on the rest of your journey it may not be easy to get on or off the cycle path. The way it stops without any signs leads many cyclists to ride on the pavement towards Habitat if they are heading to Wincheap. In Spokes' recent survey of cyclists entering Canterbury in the rush hour we found extensive use of the pavements at both Wincheap and Broad Oak roundabouts. Cycle path alternatives are needed at both places.

Spokes has written to the Highways Agency about the state of the 'metre strip,' that bit of tarmac between the grass verge and the rumble strip. On the A2 and A2050, when flooding forces cyclists to ride to Barham on the main road, the Highways Agency replied that the metre strip was for drains and debris and not for cycling despite cycle icons in the metre strip at various points around the city. BS

More articles can be found on www.spokeeastkent.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.

SPOKES

www.spokeeastkent.org.uk ISSUE 48 AUTUMN 2006



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.

Be safe - be seen on winter days and nights
Wear a SPOKES hi-vis yellow safety waistcoat. A bargain at £10 each.
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Contacting SPOKES

CHAIRMAN: John Hunt 01227 769035 johnhunt@tiscali.co.uk
VICE CHAIRMAN: Beatrice Shire 01227 766782 beatrice.shire@tesco.net
SECRETARY: Sylvia McNally 01227 713285 andy@room-101.freemove.co.uk
TREASURER: Terry Croft 01304 831887 tcroft@ucreative.ac.uk
LIAISON: Sam & Sheila Webb 01227 738296 samwebb37@hotmail.com
MEMBERSHIP: Andy McNally 01227 713285 andy@room-101.freemove.co.uk
EDITOR: Sam Webb 01227 738296 samwebb37@hotmail.com
DESIGN: Nick Evans 01227 275157 nickevanscomms@btinternet.net
RIDES: Beatrice Shire 01227 766782 beatrice.shire@tesco.net
RANGERS: Ian Rogers 01227 733792 ian.rogers28@btinternet.com
Find SPOKES on the internet at www.spokeeastkent.org.uk
Find Sustrans at www.sustrans.org.uk
Find KCC at www.kent.gov.uk/cycling

Now's the time to be a SPOKESperson!

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Annual membership - please tick relevant box
 Individual adult £6 Family/household £10
 Senior citizens/unwaged/under 16 £5

Please make cheques payable to SPOKES and send to the address overleaf. **WIN06**

View from the bridge

At almost any time of the day, the view from the pedestrian bridge which links Canterbury East Station and the city wall is one of unrelenting traffic jams. Cars stand bumper to bumper, overheating their engines and drivers. In the roads leading to the Wincheap Roundabout, such as the A28, the tailback can sometimes be a couple of miles long. Is there a more lasting solution?

The traffic engineer's method is to build more roads. It seems so simple. In the short term, in political minds at least, it wins votes. Money is spent in such huge sums people think it must be for the best. Long term, this solution leads back to what created it in the first place.

Thirty years ago the cry was for more car parks in Canterbury. Rose Lane was the answer. Wincheap Roundabout became the subject of many rebuilds to ease the problem. Then the traffic built up with a vengeance and all the old problems returned. This time they were worse. Is there a solution?

Canterbury is a small city. You can walk to most places within 30-45 minutes, in a car it can take just as long. On a bike this time is dramatically cut to between 10 and 15 minutes. Spokes knows this from experience. In 2004 and 2005 we organised the Lady Mayoress' Charity Ride to and from Reims. A number of people who joined us were infrequent cyclists. As we rode we told them how quickly they would be able to get around Canterbury on a bike. Nothing is better at spreading good news than a convert.

On return they began to extol the virtues of cycling to us. "Did we know", they would ask, "that you can get from Wincheap to the council offices in 12 minutes, or up to the university in under 20?"

Well we did, as a matter of fact, because we had told them in the first place. They would ask for more cycle routes and maps, bike stands and route signs.

There is a limit to what a fairly small group of enthusiasts like Spokes can do on its own. We think Canterbury's traffic problems need a radical rethink. If building roads encourages more cars then the alternative, building more safe cycle routes will encourage more cycling. Many of those cyclists will be car drivers.

If it has worked in Ashford, where there has been an enormous increase in cycling to work etc following the provision of cycle routes, why won't it work in Canterbury?

SAM WEBB

Apologies for the lateness of this newsletter. This has been due to illness and other matters beyond our control.

Progress on local routes in east Kent

Chartham to Canterbury NCR18: a preferred route along the Stour has been identified, and detailed drawings are being prepared by Kent Highways for consideration by land owners who have, until now, been reluctant to allow a path through their fields.

In consultation with KCC, Canterbury City Council and the Stour Countryside project, we hope to see positive progress soon.

Ashford to Canterbury NCR18, after 8 years of negotiation, agreement has been reached to provide the missing link under the M20 opening summer 2007.

Reculver to Whitstable NCR1 and RCR15: a plan has been produced indicating the preferred route to link NCR1 - including the Crab & Winkle Way - with the Viking Coastal Trail. Phase 1 Swalecliffe to Reculver is before Council members for consideration and if approved will go forward to consultation in 2006/07.

Folkestone NCR2 Lower Leas County Park, Phase II is now open.

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Conference and AGM highlight ways of solving traffic problems

Spokes attended the recent Canterbury Transport Conference held at the Westgate Hall and organised by the City Council. There were seven Powerpoint presentations, five on cars one on trains and one on the walking bus. All ignored the viability of cycling as a method of transport.

Smaller seminar groups then discussed the conference and from these there was great support for cycling, which was in turn reflected by the conference leader Professor Vickermans' summing up who also spoke of his positive impressions of cycling in California.

In contrast, John Grimshaw, CEO of Sustrans and guest speaker at Spokes' recent AGM, was understandably full of enthusiasm for the bike.

He spoke of developments in the local cycle network - see Sustrans item. He demonstrated, with evidence, the relationship between childhood obesity and cycling to school, and also the link between cycling in adulthood and cycling to school.

He showed European examples of city squares, such as Ferrara in Italy, which are car free zones, not pedestrian zones which he called car parks for pedestrians. In these squares, pedestrians and cyclists mix harmoniously.

A great evening that rekindled or lit the enthusiasm of the cycle campaigners in the audience. He would be a great cycling advocate for the next Canterbury Cycling Conference.

Marshals happy to get involved in local events



The SPOKES team of marshals who helped to coordinate the successful ride around Romney Marsh.

As a community based organisation, Spokes is always pleased to get involved with cycling projects in the district. We have been helping the Canterbury and Coastal's PCT Health Promotion Service in its Get Active Feel Alive campaign to take part in existing opportunities for sport and exercise.

Four short rides were organised using some of the network of Canterbury's cycle paths. Also, the Tour d'Herne Bay, launched by Radio Kent presenter Pat Marsh, saw 100 family riders of all ages riding a short circuit of Herne Bay with Spokes riders helping.

In June, Spokes marshalled Shepway Council's 2006 Cyclethon. 400 riders rode a 20 mile circuit from New Romney to the Lathe Barn for refreshments and back. Spokes marshals were on hand to help.

One ride along the Crab and Winkle line and another to Graveney were organised for Whitstable's Oyster festival in July and the now

annual ride to France saw 53 Spokes' cyclists following the canal to Ardres in the Pas de Calais for lunch beside Eurolac.

Spokes recently accompanied a group of Belgian cycling journalists, including a former Tour de France domestique, and the President of the Vlaamse Wielrijdersbond, the Belgian equivalent of the CTC. They saw where the Tour de France will finish and rode along the Crab & Winkle Way. This was done in conjunction with the Kent Tourism Alliance.

On Sunday 6th August Spokes riders visited "Majesty" the Fredville Oak, at 1,300 years old reputedly the oldest living tree in Britain. Lunch was taken at the pub in Chillenden. There were visits to Chillenden Windmill, Barfreston Church and the Memorial Cross at Knowlton erected to mark the 12 men who volunteered in the Great War out of a population of 39, all returned home safely.

Spokes members bring favourite stocking fillers

Spokes member Martin Lloyd is a prolific author. Not content with his book, "The Passport - the History of Man's Most Travelled Document" he has written two books on cycling.

"The Trouble with France" contains no recipes and no hand drawn maps. It does not recount how somebody richer than you went to a part of France that you had never heard of, bought a stone ruin for a song and converted it into a luxurious retreat which they expect you to finance by buying their book. But it does explain how when Martin set out on his holiday to Suffolk he ended up in Boulogne. His cycling companions figure largely in the book so watch out if you are cycling with Martin because you may be in the next one.

It will also dispel the mysteries surrounding why Max the Mad Alsatian stole his map and what the Knitted Grandmother thought of his display of hot plate juggling.

Then if you enjoyed his exploits in France there is the just published, "The Trouble with Spain."

"The Trouble with France" costs £8 and "The Trouble with Spain" £10 both include p&p. Available from Queen Anne's Fan, PO Box 883, Canterbury CT1 3WJ.

Another stocking filler could be a subscription to local history magazine Bygone Kent, published six times a year by Spokes member Nick Evans. Subscriptions can be purchased for £20 via Bygone Publishing at PO Box 201, Whitstable, Kent CT5 1WT.

Obstruction ruling could change cycling

Chairman's Chat

A case that could change the face of British cycling forever is at an appeal stage in the English courts.

Daniel Cadden was cycling fast downhill on a single-lane approach to a roundabout near Telford when he was stopped by police who believed the position he had taken on the road was forcing cars to cross the solid white line. Instead of stopping the cars, the police charged Daniel with obstructing the highway.

His position in the road was as advised in the Government book Cyclecraft which says: "The primary riding position (the centre of one's lane) should be your normal riding position when you can keep up with traffic, or when you need to prevent following drivers from passing you dangerously."

The judge took the view that the position in the road was immaterial and that by not using the cycle path on the right, on the other side of three lanes of busy traffic, Daniel was riding without due consideration. Delaying a car by one second was still a delay.

He was fined £200 with £200 costs. With support of the Cyclist's Defence Fund, a charity set up by the CTC in 2001, Daniel Cadden is appealing. The author of Cyclecraft, John Franklin, is appearing as an expert witness in his support.

Spokes has donated £50 to the fund to help in his defence. Other cyclists and organisations feel so strongly that £1,000 a day is being sent to the CDF.

A sequel to this case is the proposed rewording of a draft for the new Highway code that states cyclists "should use cycle paths where provided", in order to tackle the attitude, held by many people in the judiciary, police and public alike, that cyclists should be out of the way of motorists. The CTC continues to fight the redraft.

Bikeability scheme brings Proficiency test into 21st century

Cycling Proficiency for the 21st century has recently been launched. BIKEABILITY is a new award scheme for National Standard cycle training for both adults and children. £15m worth of funding has come from the Government which will ensure quality cycle training.

Over the next six months, Bikeability will be trialled with 3,000 children around the country, prior to its national launch. The aim is to increase the numbers of children who receive quality cycle training by qualified instructors and by 2008/9 to ensure that as many as half of year six pupils are trained through schemes awarding Bikeability.

There are three Bikeability levels: Level 1 cyclists will be able, in a traffic free environment, to demonstrate the skills and understanding to be able to make a trip and undertake activities safely in a motor traffic free environment and as a pre-requisite to a road trip.

Level 2 cyclists will be able to demonstrate the skills and understanding to be able to make a trip safely to school, work or leisure on quiet roads but with real traffic conditions.

Level 3 cyclists will be able demonstrate the skills and understanding to be able to make a trip safely to school, work or leisure on busy roads incorporating real traffic conditions and advanced road features, using complex junctions and road features.

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.