

SPOKES Annual General Meeting



Date: 9 June 2024 **Venue:** Newbury Canoe Club

Present: Rob Borthwick (RB), Kevin Bushell (KB), Ed Cooper (EC), Josh Kerry (JK).
Gordon Oliver (GO), Chris Pack (CP), William Pitt (WP)

Ref	Item	Action
1.	Apologies Received <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Apologies had been received from Mike Butler, Angela McMahon, Paul Rumsby and Clive Tombs.	
2.	Review of Minutes of 2023 AGM and Matters Arising <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Minutes of the preceding AGM held on 10 June 2023 were agreed.	
3.	Reports from Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Chair, WP: Thanked the other members of the committee. Activities for 2023/24 had included chairing monthly Spokes meetings, representing Spokes at Cycle Forum meetings, attended a meeting to discuss St John's roundabout, organised a strategy session with Spokes members, helped with cycle counts, and had drafted newsletter articles.▪ Secretary GO: Activities for 2023/24 had included preparing draft agendas and minutes for the Spokes monthly meetings and the AGM, preparing two member newsletters, contributing to website articles, keeping on top of correspondence and responding to enquiries.▪ Membership Secretary, PR: Not present, but written report provided. Membership relatively steady – currently at 168, with two new members in the last year. Four members unsubscribed from emails. Suggested that more effort was needed to grow the membership. Analysis of Spokes email communications:<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Delivered to 167 – 171 people.– Opened by 61 – 80 people (circa 36 – 47% open rate), with the worst open rate for the first newsletter and the best open rate for the second newsletter.▪ Treasurer, EC: Funds had increased from £12,224 to £12,344. Spokes had earned £2,550 from the cycle counts, £2,000 had been allocated to the towpath improvements on Ham Bridge to Bull's Lock, with the remaining expenditure on the website hosting and membership of Cycling UK and the public liability insurance.	

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	<p>KB sought clarification regarding the towpath expenditure. It was explained that this had originally been to cover the fee for the Good Exchange, which the Canal and River Trust had been reluctant to pay, but the fee had since been waived and the Spokes funding would be matched by Greenham Trust.</p> <p>It was recognised that Spokes was carrying a significant balance and members were encouraged to come forward with ideas for other projects. Previous initiatives had included providing funds to train Bikeability trainers, and donating bikes for children from low income households to cycle to school.</p> <p>It was noted that the Council was looking at automatic cycle counters, which could provide a risk to future income.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Website Editor, JK: Main actions had been to learn about the website hosting arrangements and Wordpress. A steady supply of articles had been provided. The monthly meetings and AGM had been promoted. ▪ Events Manager / Vice Chair, WP: Spokes had run another programme of led rides – numbers had been down on previous years, with only 4-5 people per ride on average. A couple of rides had been cancelled due to poor weather / ride leaders availability. A couple of new people had joined, but it was recognised that the rides needed to be promoted more widely. <p>Previous participants had been surveyed, and 50 responses had been received. Most of those who had not returned had indicated that they were just busy. There was support for keeping ride times and distances the same, although some people had said that they would like slightly shorter rides.</p> <p>Discussions had taken place regarding the Couch to 50K initiative. Newbury Velo were not interested and there had been no response from West Berkshire Council or Cycling UK. The 0-5K aspect was the most challenging.</p> <p>Spokes had not been able to run any ‘M-Check’ sessions.</p> <p>18 people had attended the Spokes Christmas meal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cycle Counts, RB: The October and February counts had been completed successfully, and the June count was imminent. RB thanked the volunteers who had helped out. <p>Analysis of the count data showed that there was evidence of increased cycling activity. RB to provide analysis.</p> <p>KB asked if the count sites had changed. It was confirmed that they hadn’t, but it was felt that some sites should be replaced. It was suggested that five sites could be dropped and new ones adopted.</p>	
		RB

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	<p>It was suggested that the site at Trinity School was in the wrong place and was missing pupils travelling to the cycle parking.</p> <p>It was suggested that new cycle routes should be surveyed.</p> <p>The Committee thanked RB for organising the counts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Vice Chair: vacant post ▪ Highways Officer: vacant post ▪ Publicity Officer: vacant post ▪ Training; vacant post 	
4.	<p>Confirmation of Required Committee Roles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed that all posts should be retained. Nobody had come forward for the vacant roles, but it was agreed that the vacant posts should be kept open. 	
5.	<p>Election of Spokes Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Election to the Spokes Committee roles was as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Chair – William Pitt – Vice-Chair – vacant – Secretary – Gordon Oliver – Membership Secretary – Paul Rumsby; – Treasurer – Ed Cooper; – Cycle Count Co-ordinator – Rob Borthwick; – Events Manager/Rides Co-ordinator – William Pitt; – Website Editor – Josh Kerry – Highways Officer – vacant; – Publicity Officer – vacant – Training Officer – vacant ▪ It was noted that RB was looking to relocate, so the Cycle Count Coordinator role may fall vacant during 2024/25. 	
6.	<p>Review of Constitution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No amendments were proposed. ▪ GO to confirm when it had last been updated. 	GO
7.	<p>Motions for Debate</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It was agreed that Spokes should continue to bank with Metro Bank, since there were no banking charges and there were few alternatives. 	

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	EC to check if the account was covered by the Financial Compensation Scheme.	EC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Priorities for investing Spokes funds were agreed as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Covering Bikeability shadowing cost. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – WP to check with Cheryl Evans. – Contributions to NCN4 towpath improvements as required. – Eling Way, if any further feasibility studies were required. – Newbury Cycle Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It was acknowledged that there would be a lot of work involved and that someone would need to drive this. – WP to approach Newbury Road Club to see if there was scope to expand their centenary events. 	WP
8.	Date of next AGM	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To be arranged for Sunday, 8 June 2025. 	GO
9.	Any Other Business	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Committee considered the actions that had arisen from the Strategy Workshop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Comms had improved, including more website articles and newsletters. – The demographics of the Committee remained unchanged – nothing had come of the proposal to involve a Trinity School pupil. – Deficiencies on the towpath and concerns about vegetation clearance had been highlighted. Liaison was ongoing with Sustrans about volunteer involvement. – WP to follow up about the Cycle Charter – Newbury Cycle Festival (mentioned above) – Campaigns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No response to the request to refresh markings at St John’s roundabout and the cycle lanes on St John’s Road, Newbury. – Double yellow lines on Andover Road had not been added. – Spokes were still not being consulted on major planning applications. 	WP

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Banjo had agreed to put up local club's cycle jerseys. WP to provide one for Spokes. - The cycle hoops on some streetlights in Newbury Marketplace were welcomed. WP to ask CT if they could be added to the remaining streetlights. 	WP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It was suggested that Spokes could undertaken some counts of bikes at cycle parking sites. - Concern was expressed that cycling was no longer permitted on the east side of the A339 between the Halfords and Sainsbury's roundabouts. The change had been made following an accident between a cyclist and a pedestrian. Also, the width had reduced following the changes to the Cheap Street junction and the erection of pedestrian guardrail. 	WP