

The West Surrey Cyclist



July – Sept 2012

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WELCOME TO OUR WORLD

It's been a funny old year, weatherwise. A hot week of March was followed by another dose of winter in April, sunburn in the first half of May preceded potential hypothermia in early June, and who's to say what the rest of the summer will be like? Let's hope the Olympic cycling road racers can cope with it all. At least they should be racing on some velvety-smooth roads, judging by the amount of fresh tarmac I've found this week on the Olympic route.

I am sorry to say that this is my last edition in the editor's chair of the West Surrey Cyclist. It has never been easy combining this with a full-time job, but unexpected family commitments have now made it impossible for me to carry on. I don't know who the next editor will be, but I hope that the magazine will continue. A heartfelt thanks to all of you who have contributed articles since I arrived.

You will notice that the article about Wales was in the April issue, but it's not a mistake – the last time a page was omitted, but this time the whole article should be there.

CTC WEST SURREY 2012

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WHAT WE ARE

CTC is the national organisation for all cyclists in the UK and Ireland. It has 70,000 members and affiliates and is the oldest and largest cycling body in the UK. It has a network of local groups of which the CTC West Surrey group is one. It campaigns for both road and offroad cyclists. Membership includes third-party insurance, legal claims advice, travel and technical guidance, on and offroad route information, and a bi-monthly national magazine.

**CTC headquarters: Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford GU2 9JX.
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CTC website: www.ctc.org.uk

CTC West Surrey group website: <http://ctcwestsurrey.org.uk/>

Group history website:

<http://homepage.ntlworld.com/chris.jeggo/wsdahist/histarch.html>

DON'T JUST SIT THERE, WRITE SOMETHING!

**All contributions are welcomed by the Editor. Please send them to
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**ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION FOR THE MAGAZINE AND RIDES
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the distributor, Phil Hamilton, 165 York Road, Woking GU22 7XS**

TOUR OF THE HILLS

By Don Gray

The Tour of the Hills is on August 19th (Sunday) from Shere Village Hall. As you know, it is our main event of the year and gets coverage in the national cycling magazines.

However, it can only take place if enough of us take part. We are still short of marshals and any help will be gratefully appreciated! We need caterers as well... the high quality of the grub is always commented on.

If you can help, please contact Don Gray on 01483 810028, or email dggray7@hotmail.com.

THE LONDON REVOLUTION

By Claire Hooper

Those of us who went out on May 20th will remember scores of cyclists streaming out of Upshott Lane. This is what they were up to:



Almost 1,400 signed up to ride the iconic 2 day route in its first year, attracted by a combination of an **incredible route**, a fantastic **overnight party** and **world class support**. After **184 miles** the riders had taken in some of the best rural riding around the **Chilterns**, **Epping Forest** and the **North Downs**, ridden some legendary **Olympic** courses like **Herne Hill Velodrome** and **Box Hill**, and ridden past iconic City landmarks like the **Millennium Dome** and **Tower Bridge**.

To be there in 2013, **register your interest now** at <http://www.london-revolution.com/> and be first in line when entries open for 2013.

TURN LEFT AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

By Richard Ellis

What better than to cycle through London on a summer day – where we have worked, walked, driven through, taken taxis, and used public transport, but never ever done a group cycle ride!?! Well it makes a change from cycling on leafy country lanes in the Home counties.

There were three of us, George Thackray ex Treasury/Market Research from Bucks, cycling buddy Alan and me Richard Ellis both from Surrey. We started in suburbia – from a “control point” on Hampton Hill nr Twickenham at 9.25am on Wednesday 30 June 2010, setting out to do an organised cycle ride 100km long, around London town and back.

The day was still cool, although temperatures were forecast to rise to 27C.

The organiser Bill Carnaby did a great job, which included 4 closely typed pages of detailed route instructions, split into 9 sections covering the 100km ride. But how were we to follow all this detail ??

e.g. ‘In 200m R Water Lane (by red phone box)’, while riding up unknown busy main roads.

And how would we cope with the traffic, and hustle and bustle of the major city roads and cycle lanes some of which were in a contraflow. With adrenalin already pumping, we gingerly made a start along a busy main road and was soon overtaken by a small bunch of cyclists

At this point we encountered an unknown regular cyclist, David from Croydon(?), who had arrived about same time as us. On enquiry we found he had cycled the route previously so he was the man to follow!! ...if we could persuade him to navigate the tricky route along the River Thames Path. With some reluctance, he agreed to do so, after we pursued him at a breathless pace for the first couple of miles. With David in the lead, we passed the red phone box (see above) - tricky to spot - and we were soon weaving in and out of the lanes and paths close to the Thames, where it was a navigational nightmare, easy to get lost and difficult to pick up the route again. Thank goodness we had a leader familiar with the route!

David did an excellent job all day and only a couple of times did we need to make a slight detour to get back on the set route. If ever, one day, you decide to do this ride, the London Cycle Guides are essential in case you get lost! They can be obtained free from <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/roadusers/cycling/11682.aspx> (nos. 9 - 11)

Our set route covered 6 major parks – Syon, Hyde Park, Greenwich, Battersea, Richmond and Bushy. How did we get from Syon Park to Hyde Park? It's still a mystery, but it was lovely to escape the traffic. Our coffee stop was a memorable experience in the middle of Hyde Park, opposite the Albert memorial, though we had difficulty in finding the nearest loo – another mystery, thankfully solved.

Crossing Hyde Park corner, and down Constitution Hill, we almost bumped into a troop of Guards riding along the Mall with their swords unsheathed. There were vast crowds assembled, some of whom asked if we were part of a cycle race. Cycling along the Strand and Fleet Street up to St Paul's brought back nostalgic memories of work lunchtimes in various pubs scattered round the Chancery Lane area. The City was quiet as we passed the Bank and turned down an obscure lane close to the Giant Gherkin.

By now, we were full of confidence riding in and out of stationary vehicles, buses and lorries heading to the traffic lights up ahead.

A little later, we were bouncing along the cobbles of Wapping with some lovely views up the Thames. We passed Limehouse and various docks and arrived at the north entrance to Greenwich foot tunnel.

Bill, the organiser, had a check-point here to stamp our 'control' cards.

We welcomed the cool damp walk through the tunnel, as the clouds have rolled away and the day is now hot. At the south side of the tunnel, the lift is not working so we heave our bikes up countless steps (at least 200!) to emerge in the centre of Greenwich –looking for a pub as it's now after one o'clock and we have covered 30 or so miles. David has been leading us at a fast pace but there have been many traffic lights and meanderings, so our average speed has been about 9 mph.

The Kings Arms in Greenwich provides welcome refreshment in a small but cool courtyard garden. The cycle ride up the hill here to Greenwich Park and the Observatory is nothing to the hills – the North Down and

Chilterns - that we normally encounter on our regular day rides so we have time to enjoy the distant views to Canary Wharf and back along the Thames to the City. Then it's down the hill to cross Blackwall Tunnel approach and head along the Thames path around the Millenium Dome. Starting to return now, will we make the 7.30pm finish deadline in Twickenham?

More confident now, we meandered our way through the dockland area north of the river and making good progress stopped for a well-earned ice cream at Tower bridge now in the hot sunshine, then our route skirted and avoided the Thames pathway which is choc-a-block with tourists and City joggers along the South Bank.

Bypassing the London Eye, we emerged from the back of the old GLC building, crossing Westminster bridge and pedalling past the Houses of Parliament – we didn't see Boris on his bike! - but gave a friendly wave to the tented encampment of protesters on the green opposite as we swept by majestically.

The return ride out from central London, involved crossing and re-crossing the Thames, which was more pleasant than the morning ride through the maze of streets west of Hyde Park. Here we pass the wealthy Chelsea flat dwellers through Battersea Park and on to Richmond Park, then taking the north side of the river to Teddington, and finally passing the golden garden gates at Hampton Court, before entering Bushy Park in early evening sunshine. With a sigh of relief and exhaustion, we sign in at Control at about 6.40pm having enjoyed an exhilarating and memorable day's ride.

Our genial organiser welcomed us back with refreshments, stamped our completed route card, and bade us farewell. He was pleased, as there were well over 50 entrants this year – compared with 28 last year.

To celebrate we called in at a local hostelry before loading - up our bikes homeward bound – with plans to repeat the “experience” next year!

George Thackray : Richard Ellis : Alan Holbrook (co-editors)

Sundried Tomato, Goat's Cheese and Rocket Risotto

Ingredients (serves 4)

- 1 litre chicken or vegetable stock
- 100g butter
- 1 large onion
- 1 bay leaf
- 350g Arborio or Carnaroli risotto rice
- 200ml dry white wine such as Verdicchio
- 100g goats' cheese – diced, plus four slices of goat's cheese for grilling
- 100g sundried tomatoes in oil, drained and sliced
- 50g rocket, chopped
- 25g Parmesan cheese, freshly grated

1. Heat stock in a pot and simmer. Melt 75g of butter in a frying pan. Add onion and bay leaf and cook until onion is soft. Add rice and stir until the grains are glistening with butter.
2. Add wine and simmer for two minutes until it has evaporated. Add a ladle of hot stock and cook over a moderate heat, stirring until it has been absorbed into the rice. Continue adding stock in this way until nearly all has been used up and the rice is al dente. This should take around 20 minutes.
3. About five minutes before the risotto is cooked stir in the diced goat's cheese, tomatoes and rocket. Cook for a further three to five minutes, adding stock as needed.
4. Add the remaining butter and the parmesan to the risotto and season to taste. Remove from the heat and cover for one minute.

Sundried tomatoes contain antioxidant vitamin C and lycopene, which could reduce your risk of heart attack by up to 50%.

Vitamin B2 in goats' milk aids oxygen-based energy production. Goat's cheese is also rich in potassium, helping to protect against heart disease and high blood pressure, and protein to repair muscles.

Thanks to Foolproof Italian Cookery by Aldo Zilli for providing this recipe.



CTC West Surrey Cyclists
ORGANIZED CYCLE RIDES
 and events open to all



July to September 2012

West Surrey organize a variety of rides on Wednesdays and Sundays, to suit the ability and inclination of a wide range of riders. The schedules below give details, and an indication of distance and average speed of each ride. However, if you would like to know more, please simply 'phone the designated ride leader.

Sunday 15th July - 100 and 75 mile rides, option of led ride or route sheets. Pirbright Village hall car park (SU945559), 8.00, £2 entry, Roger Philo 01483-23381

Sunday 19th August – Tour of the Hills (115km) and Greensand Hills (52km)

ToH - start 9.50, entry fee £6.50 for CTC or Audax members, £8.50 unaffiliated, entry forms via Audax UK website. **Greensand** - start 10.15, entry fee £4, contact Don Gray direct (include sae) for route details, or enter on day. Both start from Shere Village Hall (187/074480). Info from Don Gray on 01483-810028 or dgray7@hotmail.com

Both above events are CTC Touring Competition events.

General note for riders – please see <http://tinyurl.com/pou6zp> re riding in a group; ride leaders should additionally see <http://tinyurl.com/r2unug> for guide to leading a group.

THE EVERGREENS

A gentle cycle ride from Woking's Brewery Road Car Park, starting **11.00 hrs**, along the Basingstoke Canal Tow Path to Pirbright, for lunch at the **Royal Oak Pub** (Aldershot Road, nr. Junction with Ash Road) = approx. 8 miles each way.

First Thursday of each month = 5 July, 2 August and 6 September 2012

Every Thursday 11.00 hrs ex Brewery Road Car Park, meet for a gentle short ride.

Your contacts: Barbara Cheatham 01483 760974 and Paul Harris 01932 353695.

WOKING SUNDAY RIDES for Easy Riders and Intermediates

Morning rides with mid-morning coffee stops. Meet 9.15 outside Boots in Commercial Way, Woking. Leaders: Rico Signore (01483-822240) and Paul Harris (01932-353695).

Designated Coffee Stops

Designated Coffee Stops	
July	Sept
1 Farncombe Boat House	2 Box Hill NT Café (open air)
8 Poppy's, Badshot Lea	9 Notcutts GC, Cranleigh
15 100 and 75 mile Club Rides	16 Seale CC
22 Savill Garden	23 Savill Garden
29 Frensham GC	30 Notcutts GC, Cranleigh
Aug	Please support our Club Events to ensure their continuation.
5 Secretts GC, Milford	
12 Bocketts Farm	
19 Tour of the Hills/ Greensand Hills	
26 Windsor Farm Shop	

SUNDAY RIDES – all day Intermediates

All day at a pace normally between 11 and 13 mph, approx. 50 miles total. Designated direction for the ride, coffee and lunch stops usually decided on the day. Main contact/organisers – David Wood/Angela Byrne (01276-451169), e-mail wsintermediates@hotmail.co.uk

Please note There will be additional rides and updates, please see website:

<http://westsurreyintermediates.webs.com> Please check the website the day before the ride in case ride it is cancelled.

Date	Start	Leader	Remarks
July			
	No ride planned		Welsh Festival of Cycling
Aug			
26	Ash Station Start 7.30	Chris Jeggo	August Audacity 2 Ride to Hayling Island and back, c. 90 miles; bring your swimming things
Sept			
23	Guildford Library Start 9.15	David Wood	Direction: Cranleigh and Hindhead Coffee/Lunch/Tea – decided on the day

SUNDAY RIDERS

All day for the more energetic – 60 to 90 miles at a steady pace of over 14 mph All rides start at 9.00 unless otherwise stated Leader: Clive Richardson (01428-724390 or 07811-563234)

Date	Start	Coffee	Lunch
Jul			
1	Guildford Station	Newdigate Farm Shop	RSPB Wigginholt Nr Pulborough
8	Sunday Riders Annual Holiday – Mum's birthday!		
15	100 and 75 mile rides, Pirbright Hall car park 8.00, £2 entry, Roger Philo (01483-233381) 100 mile leader Clive Richardson, modest pace to suit all riders; route sheets also available		
22	Elstead Green	Departure Lounge café A339 Alton	Midhurst (Tea Pot tea room)
29	Olympic Road Race, arrangements to be decided, speak to Clive Richardson near the date		
Aug			
5	Farnham Sports Centre Leader:Don Jones	Rake Garden Centre	Museum Café Fort Nelson Portsdown
12	Elstead Green Leader:Peter Hackman	Tiffins Café Petworth	Bognor
19	Tour of the Hills, 110 km, start 9.50 Shere Village Hall Don Gray 01483-810028		
26	Godalming Station Leader:Peter Hackman	Horsham (Café in the Park)	Shoreham Airport
Sept			
2	Farnham Sports Centre	New Alresford Station	Lunch: White Horse PH, Whitchurch Tea: Lasham Aerodrome
9	Guildford Station	Kirdford Tea Room	West Dean Gardens nr Singleton
16	Godalming Station Leader:Peter Hackman	Petworth Tiffins Cafe	East Wittering
23	Shalford Station	Warnham Nature Reserve	Wiston Tea Room Nr Ashington
30	Guildford Station Leader:Peter Hackman	Chocolate Coffee Bar, Windsor	Jenners, Maidenhead

FARNHAM WAYFARERS SUNDAY RIDES – for Easy Riders

Approximately 18 to 25 miles (some tracks, suitable for road bikes) at a pace of around 8 mph. All ages and families welcome. Rides take place on the 3rd Sunday of each month, and all start from The Maltings, Farnham (186/841465) unless otherwise stated. 9.30 start, with a coffee stop later in the morning. Leader: Basia Pietrusiewicz (01252-324357)

15th July The Maltings

19th August The Maltings

16th September Meet Puttenham Common Car Park (186/921461) at 10.30 to watch and see the finish of the Tour of Britain cycle race. Return to car park approx. 17.00 – 17.30

FARNHAM WAYFARERS SUNDAY RIDES

Approximately 40 miles at a pace of around 10 mph. Rides take place on the 2nd Sunday of each month, and all start from The Maltings, Farnham (186/841465) at 9.30, with a stop for a pub lunch. Co-ordinator Liz Palethorpe (01252-792187), leaders as stated.

8th July Celebrate 20 years of Farnham group, rerun original ride, with pub lunch and celebratory tea and cake at 41 Boundstone Road Leader Liz Palethorpe

12th August – Arthur Twiggs

9th September – Barbara Pietrusiewicz

Extra Rides

28th and 29th July – Ride to watch Olympic Road Race, details TBA, leader John Wilkins

26th August – Ride to Haslemere along The South Downs Way to Bognor Roman Villa. Meet Tanners Lane Car Park (186/902331) at 9.30, coffee at Old Railway Station Petworth, picnic lunch. Leader Leonie Onslow

FSARNHAM WAYFARERS MIDWEEK RIDES

Approximately 40 to 45 miles at a pace of 10 to 12 mph. Rides take place on the first Wednesday of each month, and all start from The Maltings, Farnham (186/841465) at 9.30, with a stop for a pub lunch. Leader - Liz Palethorpe (01252-792187)

4th July Coffee - George, Odiham

1st August Coffee – Shankley’s Liphook

5th September Coffee - Café Bottega dei Spori, Alton

Extra Ride

15th August Ride to Queen Elizabeth Country Park. Coffee The Triangle Liss; picnic lunch or café, approx. 55 miles

GUILDFORD AND GODALMING WAYFARERS – Sunday Rides

Half day rides (unless otherwise stated) at a pace of 10 to 12 mph; any ride can be extended to a lunch stop, decided on an ad hoc basis on the day. All rides leave promptly at 9.30

Group Leader : Peter Fennemore (01483-300689)

Date	Start	Coffee
Jul		
3	Guildford Library (186/998466)	Fairoaks Airport, Chobham
15	Godalming, Waverley BC Car Park (186/971440)	Notcutts Garden Centre, Cranleigh
Aug		
5	Guildford Library	Lucky Duck, Shere
19	Tour of the Greensand Hills (53 km), meet Shere Village Hall 10.00, coffee Peaslake Village Store, leader Peter Fennemore or do your own thing	
Sept		
2	Guildford Library	Squires GC, West Horsley
16	Godalming, Waverley BC Car Park	Avalon GC, Churt
30	Godalming, Waverley BC Car Park	Coffee: Green Room Chiddingfold Lunch:NT café Hindhead

WOKING MIDWEEK WAYFARERS All day rides every Wednesday, with a designated mid-morning coffee break and a lunch stop decided on the day. Rides cater for a variety of levels, as indicated by the second column in the table below. **Paragon Pub** is for those members who like to socialize but may not want a long ride. **Leaders:** Rico Signore (01483-822240), John Murdoch (01276-856712)

Barbara Cheatham (01483-760974), Paul Harris (01932-353695)

E = Easy Riders, **I** = Intermediates, **TA** = train (car) assisted ride, **L** = Longer Distance

July 2012			Paragon Pub	
4	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Ripley Post Office 187/052568 Bocketts Farm	King William IV West Horsley
11 or	TA IEL IE	Meet: Coffee: Meet: Coffee:	9.30 dep. Woking Sation, arr. 10.10 Alton Cassandra's Cup, Chawton 9.45 Mayford Green 186/996562 Farncombe Boat House	The Good Intent Puttenham
18	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.30 Pirbright Green 186/946558 Farnham Maltings	The Swan Ash Vale
25	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Bus Stop at Mimbridge 186/991607 Windsor Farm Shop	The Sun Windlesham
August 2012				
1 or	IEL IE	Meet: Coffee: Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Black Prince, Woodham 186/043621 Walton Bridge (Thames Path/ Richmond Park) 9.45 Ripley Post Office 187/052568 Bocketts Farm	King William IV, West Horsley
8 or	TA IE	Meet: Coffee: Meet: Coffee:	9.25 dep Woking Station, 10.21 Rowlands Castle Stansted House GC 9.45 Pirbright Green 186/946558 Poppy's, Badshot Lea	The Good Intent Puttenham
15	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Send New Inn 186/017561 The Lucky Duck, Shere	Saddlers Arms Sendmarsh
22 or	Car IL IE	Meet: Coffee: Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Pinkneys Green Car Park 175/855816 to be decided – long ride to the Chilterns 9.45 Ripley Post Office 187/052568 Squires Garden Centre, West Horsley	The Bulls Head, West Clandon
29	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Mayford Green 186/996562 Seale Craft Centre	The Royal Oak Pirbright
September 2012				
5	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Send New Inn 186/017561 Squires GC, West Horsley	Saddlers Arms Send Marsh
12	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Mayford Green 186/996562 Farncombe Boat House	The Donkey, Charleshill
19 or	TA IEL IE	Meet: Coffee: Meet: Coffee:	9.25 dep Woking Station, 09.49 arr Haslemere Aylings GC (on A272 near Trotton, 197/842224) 9.45 Mimbridge Nurseries 186/991607 Savill Garden	Royal Marine Lyne
26	IE	Meet: Coffee:	9.45 Ripley Post Office (187/052568) Bocketts Farm	Windsor Castle Little Bookham
All train times approximate, please check with SWTrains				

CROSSING WALES

By Claire Hooper

DAY 1 – Brecon to Tregaron

After a night's camping we drove to Brecon Cathedral, a good landmark from which to start. I set off after agreeing to rendezvous with Duncan, my husband and 'support driver', in Tregaron. I left the OS maps with him because there was only one road, so no chance of getting lost. The first 10 miles were through pretty, pastoral country, winding up and down and rising gradually, but the first proper hill was such hard work that I stopped to check the brakes were toed in properly. Phew! They weren't.

I was now above the fields, on open moorland where clouds of flies descended every time I stopped. The area was marked as a Danger Zone on the OS map and there were red flags along the road, with signs warning me not to leave it. I was accompanied to the top of the mountain by the booms of some very large ordnance close by! It started to drizzle. 'Low cloud', I thought, 'I'll drop out of it.' I could see the valley below the cloud then started to head downhill. To my right the drop was so steep that I couldn't see the slope, but at least I was sheltered from the weather.

By the bottom it was really wet. On went the trousers, then lights as the wind rose and the rain poured down. The rain made my glasses useless, so I took them off for the endless eight miles to Llanwrtyd Wells. I'd planned to go from there to Tregaron up the hill comfortably called the Devil's Staircase then across a plateau, but now I couldn't even see the mountains for the rain. I had no maps to look for another route, so I retired to a pub where the landlord greeted me, saying 'You look like a drowned rat'! He brought out his own maps, but the route he suggested was down A roads, a bad idea with so much spray. In the end I managed to ring Duncan then cycled back to meet him in Builth Wells.

This was the best bit of the day. Although it was still pouring the rain was warm and the wind was behind me now. I rode for miles on a quiet, switch-backing lane, rich with plant life, gradually climbing until the last mile into Builth. Even the van drivers were friendly!. Finally I arrived in Builth and we drove to Tregaron over the lonely single-track road I should have taken.

Day 2 – Tregaron to Aberystwyth

The bike and my clothes were dry and ready for the ride across the Cors Caron, the biggest upland bog in Britain, to Strata Florida abbey to answer a BCQ question.

I was so carried away watching the beautiful views as I climbed up out of the valley to the Cors Caron that it took a while to realise that I was on the wrong road and had to make an eight-mile detour. The extra distance through the lanes to Strata Florida was rewarding both for scenery and for some very moving local history. The information boards in each tiny village showed that this peaceful rural area had been the centre of the mining industry and the source of Welsh Methodism BEFORE the South Wales coalfields. The terrible working conditions were graphically described and very difficult to equate with how the area looks now.

At the ruins of Strata Florida abbey I admired the great Norman arch and found the answer to the BCQ question. After several miles uphill the road swooped across lovely open countryside then dipped to a point where all the hills converged, at Pontrhydygroes: the only way out was up. Passing a 16% sign (gulp!), I ground steadily upwards through pine woods to the very top of the hill. From there it was an easy ride into Devil's Bridge. I'd hoped to ring Duncan there, but there was no mobile phone signal.

I had a wander round the Rheidol rail station and admired the views into the valley, then set off to answer another BCQ question. I'd assumed I was already on the hill top, but the road went up anyway for three miles, opening up fresh vistas across the mountains. I found the answer to the question then headed downhill again for a picnic. By now clouds were rolling up and a refreshing drizzle accompanied me most of the way to Aberystwyth.

The road ran along the side of the Rheidol valley and I stopped with an eye-level view of three red kites, wheeling and climbing before gliding over my head to gather nesting materials from the field behind me. Just to complete the picture, fighter planes streaked across the sky behind them and disappeared into the distance. As I descended into Aberystwyth my mobile phone buzzed with accumulated messages and I arranged to meet Duncan at a campsite nearby.

Day 3 – Aberystwyth to Llandrindod Wells

During the night the wind rose so much that I went into the car to sleep; even there I was woken by the car bouncing! The tent had been torn beyond repair with Duncan still in it, so it was nice to know we had a B&B booked for the next night.

The same wind blew behind me all morning, along miles of mainly flat road back to Devil's Bridge. After that I turned off along the Mountain Road to Rhayader for a beautiful ride. The road to Cwmystwyth, where there are traces of habitation dating back 3,500 years, climbed through green fields to moorland past ancient and modern copper mines. For mile after mile the road wound gently upwards through sheep-cropped hills, until the head of the valley opened onto a plain threaded with streams. The only other traffic was motorbikes.

The road still climbed but the tailwind pushed me over the top to the scenic road around the Elan Valley reservoirs. A red kite wheeled above me as I watched paragliders lift off from the valley head.

I followed the road around the three reservoirs, gradually descending from mountains into woodland. The last reservoir was so low that in places only a strip of water remained. By now I was also running on empty and was very annoyed to find that the Visitor Centre, where I'd planned to have a coffee, was about eighty feet below the road. I drank my water and ate a picnic beside the road instead.

Rhayader, the next landmark, was full of people watching a vintage car rally. Since the cavalcade does eight circuits of this little town, I met it three times before I came out the other side and headed down the A470 to Llandrindod. Just outside the town I passed a red kite feeding station with about thirty kites wheeling in the air above it, waiting for their tea.

I finally managed a much-needed coffee at services on the A470 and it kept me going for the last few miles into Llandrindod Wells. By now journey's end was in sight and as usual I found myself wishing that I could keep going, but of course I arrived there in the end.

The final treat came when I visited the National Bike Museum the following day. There's too much of it to see in one visit, so I have an excellent reason to go back again! Although, as the curator said, 'Ah, but by then we'll have moved everything around. You'll never win!'

ROAD CLOSURES FOR OLYMPIC ROAD RACES

The build-up to the Olympics is gathering momentum. Those of you who have cycled anywhere along the routes will have noticed that resurfacing work is taking place and lots of yellow signs are already announcing closed roads and tow-away areas. Here is the council's information:

Any road that has a junction that meets the race route will close at that junction. No cars can be parked on the route on event days.

The roads that will be closed can be found on these maps:

Olympic Road Race map (PDF)

<http://www.gosurrey.info/assets/documents/cyclingroadracemap>

Olympic Time Trial Race map (PDF)

<http://www.gosurrey.info/assets/documents/cyclingtimetrial>

Interactive map

<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/maps/surrey-interactive-map>

Times of road closures

Extensive road closures and parking restrictions along the route will be in place from the early hours of the morning until early evening on event days. The closures will also impact on surrounding roads, with traffic congestion likely along key routes.

To meet the requirements of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG), the following road closures will take place:

Road Race - Saturday 28 July

- the section of the Road Race route through Surrey from Hampton Court down to Box Hill (including the Box Hill loop) will close from 4am.
- the section after Box Hill through Leatherhead and Esher back up to Hampton Court will close from 6am.

Road Race - Sunday 29 July

- all sections of the Road Race route will close from 6am.

The exit slip roads from both carriageways of the A3 to the A244 at Esher Common junction will also be closed all day Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 July.

will also loop through East and West Molesey before rejoining the women's route just south of Hampton Court. Hampton Court Road (between Adam's Gate and Hampton Court roundabout) will be closed from 10pm on Tuesday 31 July. The full route and surrounding roads will be closed from 5.30am on Wednesday 1 August.



You know you're addicted to cycling if...

- ◆ You use wax on your chain, but not on your legs (girls).
You use wax on your chain, AND on your legs (boys)
- ◆ Your current bike is older than your grown up children.
- ◆ Your first course when you eat out is a large banana split.
- ◆ You yell "Car!" when passing another car, and "Bump!" when you see a pothole - while driving your car.
- ◆ Your bike has more miles on its computer than your car's odometer.
- ◆ Your bikes are worth more than your car.
- ◆ You buy a people-carrier and immediately remove the rear seats to allow your bike(s) to fit.
- ◆ When you move to a new area the first thing you look for is a bike shop.
- ◆ You have more bike jerseys than low-cut tops.
- ◆ You take your bike along when you shop for a car - just to make sure the bike will fit inside.
- ◆ You view crashes as an opportunity to upgrade components.
- ◆ You clean your bike(s) more often than your house.
- ◆ You and your significant other have and wear identical riding clothes.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

JULY 15th: 100 mile and 75 mile rides (option of a led ride or use route sheets). Pirbright Hall car park, 8.00am start. £2 (Roger Philo 01483 233381)

AUGUST 19th: Tour of the Hills 110 km, start 09.50am, Shere Village Hall (Don Gray 01483 810028).

Further details of both these rides are included in the Rides List.

To find details of all the events go to:

<http://www.westsurrevctcda.org.uk/> and click on DA Events.

