



The Spindle MARCH 2026 cycleclubsudbury.com

Hi folks!

It seems like an age since the January Spindle but now we get into the start of the 'proper' riding season, packed with a variety of events of all levels and Spring is (sort of) here!!

If there are any cycling related events or bits of news you would like to promote in the Spindle do get in touch (contact at end of this document).

Happy and safe riding to you all and The Spindle will return in April, back to its monthly incarnation...

Sharon B



ROBIN'S BITS-

COMMITTEE MEETINGS; 7PM, 1 APRIL, 6 MAY at the Stevenson Centre

UPCOMING EVENTS:

CCS MAD MARCH HILLY 22 MILE OPEN TT, SUNDAY 29 MARCH

From Lavenham Village Hall.

If you're intending to ride, entries close on Tuesday 17 March, although Rob Davies might be able to advise on late entries. There are categories for both TT and road bikes. Entries via the CTT website Course details are in the CCS Handbook or on the CCS website. If you can publicise the event to potential riders or other clubs, please do so!

There has been an appeal for helpers with catering, marshalling etc. If you've not put your name forward yet, contact Rob at rob.ev.jack@gmail.com; he may still have need for more!

CCS COLCHESTER TRACK EVENING; There may be another track night later in March – keep a lookout for an email.

An opportunity for winter cycling in a traffic-free environment, on a super smooth but grippy surface.

CCS SUMMER TIME TRIAL SERIES

The renowned CCS Thursday Evening TT series starts at 6.45pm on 16 April, on the Brent Eleigh course, and runs weekly through to the end of August; 20 TTs in the series. To encourage new club riders, this first event on our most 'user-friendly' course will be free to enter for CCS 1st and 2nd claim members. Subsequent evenings, a very reasonable £4 to members, £5 non-members.

All our events this year are 'Come and Try It' events, which means anyone can ride (over 12 years old).

We welcome riders from other clubs, and visiting riders. If you know of other riders who might be interested, bring them along. TT and road bike riders are all welcome.

Another date to note; the 10 mile TT on 30 April will be at the Colchester Northern Gateway track, a completely safe riding environment – why not give it a go? The timekeepers are looking forward to the challenge!

There are full details on our website at <https://cycleclubsudbury.com/evening-tt-series>

We'll be using our usual pre-registration and payment on-line system. A reminder e-mail will be sent out on the Sunday, with a 'request to ride' reply needed by 6pm on Tuesday evening. A start sheet will be issued shortly after this, before the Thursday event.

Payment, (preferably before you ride!), can be by bank transfer, PayPal, or by card on the night, although pre-payment is preferred.

Riders can also turn up and pay on the night, if pre-registration isn't possible; they will be sent off after pre-registered riders.



BOB BUSH

Bob now has a new email address; bobbushba43@gmail.com

CCS SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2026

If you've not yet paid, now is definitely the time to do so!

Membership subs for 2026 are the same as last year;

Juvenile (up to 16) £5

Junior (16 - Dec. after 18) £8

Senior (18-65) £20

Senior (65-80) £15

Family £26

Second claim £12

Associate £4

In addition, First and Second claim members can pay up-front for a season of Thursday evening time trial rides; £65 for the season of 20 time trials.

- Payment by bank transfer is the preferred payment method. Bank details; Barclays Bank, Account name Cycle Club Sudbury, Sort code 20 83 50, Account number 30308188; ***please use your surname as a payment reference.***
- Payment also possible by post, with a cheque (to Cycle Club Sudbury) posted to Robin Weaver, 14, Chapel Street, Bildeston, IP7 7EP.



Starting and finishing at
Dedham Primary School,
Parsons Field
Dedham
CO7 6BZ

200km starts 08:00
100km starts 09:00

Entry £10 online at:

200km GTdS

[https://www.audax.uk/event-
details/calendar/13818-
grand_tour_de_stour](https://www.audax.uk/event-details/calendar/13818-grand_tour_de_stour)

100km TdS

[https://www.audax.uk/event-
details/calendar/14320-
tour_de_stour](https://www.audax.uk/event-details/calendar/14320-tour_de_stour)

The King Visited Dedham this year but was a tad to early for the Tour de Stour rides

Challenge yourself to go that bit farther - 200km Grand Tour de Stour & 100km Tour De Stour AUDAX Rides Saturday, 11 April 2026

Come ride the Stour — where quiet lanes, big skies and great company make every kilometre a pleasure.

Set off into the gentle beauty of the Stour Valley on one of our Audax adventures, starting from Dedham Primary School, just 8 km from Manningtree Railway Station. From the first turn of the pedals, you'll discover a day of rewarding cycling — unhurried roads, memorable landscapes, and plenty of café stops to keep spirits high.

Grand Tour de Stour — 200 km

A truly immersive journey through the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Leaving Dedham, the route winds gently upstream through peaceful villages and tranquil Suffolk lanes to the very source of the River Stour at Wrattling Common, on the Suffolk–Cambridgeshire border.

Turning downstream, you'll follow the river all the way to its estuary at Harwich. Along the way, a short detour rewards



Sunset on restored HMS
Ganges mast at Shotley

CCS AUDAX RIDES FROM DEDHAM, SATURDAY 11 APRIL

Organised by Ian Lovelock.

Two distances available; 100k Tour de Stour, and 200k Grand Tour de Stour.

You don't need to be a member of AudaxUK to ride. Entry via the AudaxUK website Calendar Events page; there is a simple on-line registration, if you've not ridden an Audax before. A bit more information on audax rides generally can be found in the CCS Handbook, page 17. These rides feature excellent routes, and excellent refreshment opportunities.

Reliability Ride January 2026

On Sunday 25 January 2026, the forecast promised more than the day delivered. Conditions were wetter and windier than expected, yet 53 people thought type two fun was the order of the day and turned out for the annual CCS Reliability Rides. It was easy to spot the returning riders who came prepared with mudguards, and there was plenty of laughter at the riders who enjoyed Suffolk's finest roads and the associated muck as was shown on their faces.

I don't know how long this event has been a staple of the CCS calendar, certainly for as long as when I joined CCS 23 years ago. The event once again offered a welcome chance to socialise and stretch the legs, with two route options available: over 48 or 28 miles, on roads that have more car traffic but should be in better repair plus gritted if cold.

As ever, the event started from the Stevenson Centre in Great Cornard, and its smooth running was entirely down to the dedication of our volunteers. I'd like to mention in dispatches Robin W and Robin S for marshalling at the Lavenham turn, along with Sue, Linda, Sally, Dave, Martin, Don, Gloria, Les, Sue, Pat, Peter, and all the other unsung heroes who provided a splendid spread of cakes. If I've forgotten to name check someone I can on apologise. Your efforts were hugely appreciated and added real warmth to an otherwise wet and windy winters day. Thanks also to Brian W, who once again came up trumps by sorting out the hall for us.

A special mention must go to all the riders who listened to my advice at the start and managed to stay upright throughout—no spills reported. There was a surprising number of happy faces at the end in what were challenging conditions. A big plus for me, as it keeps the paperwork to a minimum and I didn't have to complete an accident form.

I'm pleased to report that all event costs, including hall hire and other expenses, were fully covered. I'll be stepping down from this role, but I'll be delighted to support Les and Sue, who have kindly agreed to take over the event in 2027. Perhaps this will finally give me the chance to ride it myself—on a bike with mudguards, naturally.

Andrew Hoppit





Mad March Hilly 2026

The club's **Mad March Hilly Open TT** takes place, from the HQ at Lavenham Village Hall, on Sunday March 29th between 7.20 and 10.30, so you'll be free for mothers day activities. **We need volunteers for all the positions below. Equally if you want to ride please enter - entries, via the CTT website, close on 17 March.**

If you're able to help, please let Rob know by email to rob.ev.jack@gmail.com

10 Marshals needed. Need a volunteer for the course recce on Saturday by bike or on Sunday by car. We need people to do tea and coffee. **Donated cakes would be most welcome.**

We cannot do this event without your help and its much appreciated.

Best

Rob Davies

Role	Who	Notes	Time required at HQ	
	Course Recce		Day before or early on race day	
	Role	Who	Notes	Time required at HQ
1	Pusher off 1			07:30
	Pusher off 2			07:30
2	Marshal 1		Gt Waldingfield junction B1115/Tentree Rd	07:20
3	Marshal 2		Gt Waldingfield roundabout	07:20
4	Marshal 3		Valley Rd/A134 junction	07:20
5	Marshal 4		Valley Rd/A134 junction	07:20
6	Marshal 5		Newton Green A134/A1071 junction	07:20
7	Marshal 6		Stables Corner A1071 (sharp right bend 0.5-mile past Brewers Arms PH)	07:20
8	Marshal 7		Hadleigh A1071/A1141 junction	07:20
9	Marshal 8		Semer A1141/B1115 junction just past Letts Pools	07:20
10	Marshal 9		Semer Gate Farm - sharp left turn just past pond by barns	07:20
11	Marshal 10		Monks Eleigh	07:20
12	Extra marshal 1			07:20
13	Extra marshal 2			07:20
14	Timekeeper 1	Brian Webber	Located at Start	07:20
15	Timekeeper 2	David Miller	Located at Finish	07:20
16	Timekeeper 3	Robin Weaver	Located at Finish	07:20
17	Timekeeper 4	Linda Pillett	Located at Finish	
18	Phone	Rob Davies	Located at Finish	
19	Sign-on 1	Ev Davies		06:45

20	Sign-on 2			06:45
21	Refreshments 1			07:15
22	Refreshments 2			07:15
23	Refreshments 3			07:15
25	Scores/results			07:30



Colchester Track Night enjoyed by all on Tuesday 3rd March

CTT East District

Spoco East 2026

Time to sign up for Spoco East 2026 – Join the East District sporting course competition – rules are simple ride as many events as you want points will be given for each event and at the end of the season you best scores from 4 x 10 mile (A) and 3 x 25 mile (B) events will counted – no awards or prizes are given in 2026 – just a certificate issued at the riders request – entry fee for 2026 is free – donations at your discretion will be split between 2 charities East Anglian Air Ambulance and Norfolk Blood Bikes – All you have to do is turn up and ride – we do the rest.

To bring the competition inline with modern age group class – there will points winners from the following age categories. Juveniles (U16) Juniors (16-18)

Open – Under 40's - Women's Under 40's

Group A – 40 – 44	Group B – 45 – 49	Group C – 50 – 54
Group D – 55 – 59	Group E – 60 – 64	Group F – 65 – 69
Group G – 70 – 74	Group H – 75 – 79	Group I – 80 – 84
Group J – 85 – 89	Group K – 90 – 94	

All East District Open events (with Exception of Loose Cannon's Cond. Event which is on DC Course & the CC Sudbury Hill climb) count as qualifying events.

To Entry:

Simply email markfairhead@btinternet.com Give your Name, Email address, Club & D.O.B and declare if you make a charitable donation.

Make Donations to: East District Cycling Association, HSBC Dereham Branch, Sort Code 40-20-08, Account Number 0117893



<https://www.eaaa.org.uk/>



<https://www.norfolkbloodbikes.org.uk/>

CYCLE CLUB SUDBURY TT TARGET TIMES 2026

Best times for 2025 shown in Black

Target Times for 2026 shown in Red (Mins & Secs)

	Lavenham 10		Brent Eleigh		Acton	
Adrian Ablitt	31,47	30,42	27,04	26,09	26,31	25,37
Phil Barnes	26,14	25,21	21,40	20,56	22,11	21,26
Jim Bird	30,40	29,38	25,15	24,24	25,33	24,41
Doz Bree	26,06	25,13	21,17	20,34	22,09	21,24
Anna Brown	0	0	25,39	24,47	25,33	24,41
Ron Butcher	0	0	34,07	32,58	0	0
Cris Campos	32,33	31,27	26,57	26,02	27,37	26,41
Cris Coultas	31	30,12	24,28	23,38	24,50	24,00
Rob Davies	28,01	27,04	23,29	22,41	23,08	22,21
Les Dunham	31,23	30,19	25,35	24,43	26,21	25,28
Richie Edwards	28,45	27,47	22,48	22,02	23,37	22,49
David Fenn	30,13	29,12	24,53	24,03	25,13	24,22
John Golder	27,38	26,42	22,28	21,42	23,10	22,23
Stephen Hitchcock	28,36	27,38	0	0	0	0
Will Headley	28,53	27,54	23,27	22,39	24,13	23,24
Angela Lesslie	28,07	27,10	0	0	24,05	23,16
Sandra Mackay	30,45	29,43	0	0	0	0
Gavin Mc Gillivray	31,34	30,30	0	0	28,01	27,04
Mads Mikkelsen	0	0	0	0	23,27	22,39
Tom Moore	35,28	34,16	29,29	28,29	29,55	28,54
Elle Parsons	37,54	36,37	29,27	28,27	0	0
Jack Poole	28,46	27,48	24,11	23,22	24,41	23,51
Alc Purcell	24,36	23,46	20,02	19,21	20,31	19,49
James Rush	25,54	25,01	21,28	20,44	21,31	20,47
Mat Shotbolt	23,41	22,53	19,41	19,01	20,04	19,23
Ian Short	22,50	22,04	18,50	18,12	0	18,16
Ann Shuttleworth	28,40	27,42	24,03	23,14	28,49	23,01
Sue Triplow	27,14	26,19	22,20	21,35	22,42	21,56
Charlie Upton	25,56	25,,03	20,47	20,05	21,36	20,52
Dan Upton	26,41	25,47	22,38	21,52	23,02	22,15
Nick Webber	26,33	25,39	21,51	21,07	22,10	21,25
Caroline Wyke	34,41	33,31	29,31	28,31	28,46	27,48

Cycle to Cannes

Having written about the Cycle to Cannes event that he rode in 2024 in Spindle, David Hart is taking part in the event again this year, starting last Thursday 5th March.

This year, the group will be cycling to Portsmouth, catching the overnight ferry and then covering the rest of the route from Caen to Cannes over another five days.

You can follow David's progress on strava here - <https://strava.app.link/5rT3NsEQf1b>

The ride is raising money for three amazing charities - Coram (children's rights and adoption charity), Cyclists Fighting Cancer (recently featured on the One Show) and the Tom AP Rhys Pryce Trust (looking out for the welfare of young people growing up in challenging circumstances).

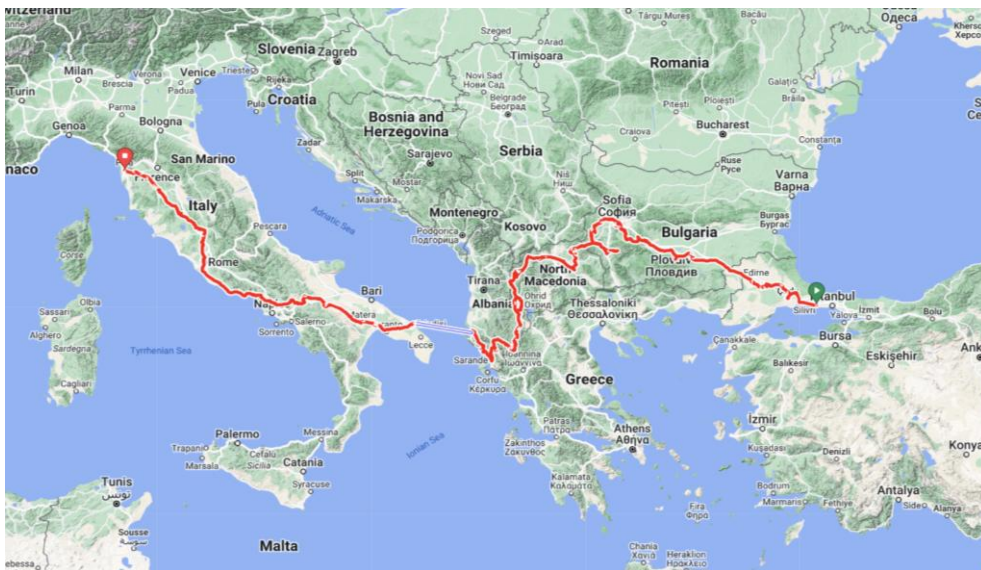
David's reached his fundraising raising target, but any further donations for these good causes would be gratefully received <https://www.justgiving.com/page/david-hart-cycle-to-mipim-2026>



Cycling the Silk Road pt 3

By Gavin McGillivray

Cycling a Further Stretch of the Silk Road, Istanbul to Pisa, April – May 2024



Since retiring in mid-2021, I spend a couple of months each Spring cycling the Silk Road in stages, starting in Almaty, and intending to end up in England. Friends join me for some stretches. I stay in inexpensive hotels and B&Bs. [In 2022 I biked](#) through Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. [In 2023](#) from Azerbaijan through Georgia and Turkey to Istanbul.

[The 2024 ride](#) would start from Istanbul. I head inland along tracks through large fields, no hedges, few trees, no wasteland, few farmsteads or people, lots of dogs



Near Babaeski, Western Turkey

Early one morning, I ride sleepily down a seemingly deserted track. Suddenly a pack of big Kangal shepherd dogs bound towards me. No way I can outrun them. I grind to a halt, yell, and threaten them with stones. This redoubles their fury. A maelstrom of dogs surrounds me, barking, snapping and snarling. I try to keep my bike between me and most of the pack and inch along the track. After about 20 long minutes, one by one the dogs begin to lose interest and return whence they came, honour presumably satisfied.

I take to the next highway, gladly riding along the hard shoulder to Edirne.



Selimiye Mosque, Edirne

Over the Bulgarian border, and north-west to the 10 Bachkovo Monastery with its gaudily-restored but still fabulous murals.



Bachkovo Monastery Frescoes, Bulgaria

I climb through grape-growing country and then forest, and on to Sofia – moulded by 2,000 years Greek, Roman, Ottoman, Soviet and European occupation.

I rest up for a couple of days – exploring the eateries, churches, galleries, museums – and on a whim see Tchaikovsky's opera *Ace of Spades* - from the Upper Upper Upper (really) Circle.

In Boyana Church, the 13thC frescos in true colours drawn from the earth depict scenes of great gentleness and reverence.



Boyana Church, near Sofia

I cycle west, many villages dilapidated and semi-abandoned.



Mureno, Bulgaria

A detour south-east to visit Rila monastery. Founded in the 10thC, Rila became a national patriotic well as religious centre, and is credited with keeping Bulgaria's sense of its own national identity alive during four centuries of Ottoman rule.



Rila Monastery, Bulgaria

Back west again through the Osogovo Mountains – and over the border to North Macedonia.

Historically but intermittently ruled by Bulgaria, then consolidated into Yugoslavia after WWII, North Macedonia was carved out of the latter's break-up in 1991.

Just over the border, after supper of beans & sausage - a trio of visiting Bulgarians invite me to drink Rakia with them. They assure me that North Macedonia is really part of Bulgaria, that Biden defends Ukraine because his son has business interests there, that Putin is trying to make a fairer new world, that Covid vaccines are a trap to control us, and that the EU is a mafia designed to exploit all in its purview. They conclude - having heard where I had worked and travelled - that I am a CIA spy.

Central Skopje is dominated by huge newly-constructed neo-classical buildings and statues. They don't look as if they will age well. Few ancient buildings remain – most destroyed by earthquakes, conflict, and redevelopment (even Mother Theresa's birth-place dwelling was bulldozed to make way for a shopping mall).



Central Skopje, North Macedonia

A school friend Andrew flies in to cycle with me to the Adriatic Coast. We drop down to Lake Ohrid, straddling North Macedonia and Albania.

The Communist dictator Enver Hoxha ruled Albania from 1944 to his death in 1985. Hoxha abhorred the capitalist West and broke with the Soviet Union and China. Very few people or goods were allowed to leave or enter. Hoxha closed all churches and mosques – and built 750,000 bunkers.



Roadside bunker near Barmash, Albania

In her book 'Free', the Albanian Lea Ypi, now a professor at LSE, gives a brilliant account of her childhood in the country in the 1980s and 90s.

Two days riding south through scruffy farmland on rutted pot-holed roads (as in the UK). Then west along the Vjosa River - the last major undammed river in Europe.



Near Çarçovë, Vjosa River, Albania

We reach the Adriatic shore, cycle along the coastal hills – and encounter a string of Deux Cheveux cars revving up before clattering up a rocky track, part of a 2CV rally from Croatia to Greece.



Mount Çika, Albania

Vlore an unlovely collection of low-rise apartment & office blocks, from which we take the ferry to Brindisi. I set off west, my first stop Matera.



Matera, Puglia, Italy

Matera is one of the world's oldest continuously-inhabited cities. Since the 10 BC (*sic.*), people have cut dwellings in the sides of the Gravina canyon, and joined then by alleys, stairways and little courtyards. Movies, including James Bond's *No Time to Die*, are filmed there.

I over-night in Rome with another dear friend Nadia. We did the Agricultural Economics MSc at Reading 44 years ago, me sponsored by the ODA as part of its graduate intake scheme that would then give me my first posting, in Bolivia. Those were the days!

From Rome, north to Tuscany. Impossibly picturesque – but impossibly hilly.



Alleron, Tuscany

On my last day, I am overtaken by a cyclist with only one leg

But eventually I pedal slowly into Pisa, the Tower still astonishing despite its familiarity. I am spent. .



Next year, I aim to finish the ride back to England. I could restart from Tuscany, scoot west round the worst of the Alps, and then north across France. But I'm tempted to return to Albania, cycle up the Adriatic Coast, skirt the Alps to the west and head north across Germany. What a happy choice to look into over the coming months

Next time in The Spindle, Gavin tackles Rome to London (this is now a four-parter article!).

If you would like something included in The Spindle you can submit via Robin Weaver or send directly to me at shazzab24@btinternet.com. PLEASE ALWAYS PUT 'SPINDLE' IN THE SUBJECT BOX!!

Thanks all – see you next time...



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Doz Bree

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small at competitive prices!
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