

# West Surrey Cycling Club

## Annual Report 2026

### Definition

West Surrey CC is the local member group of Cycling UK covering the postcode areas GU1-10, 12, 15-16 and 18-27, KT7-8, 10-16 and 24, and RG45. Total CUK members in these areas exceeds 1200.

### Organisation

The committee consisted of the four ex-officio posts of Chair (Nick Flew), Rides Secretary (John Carolin), Secretary (Nick Davison) and Treasurer (Keith Stainer), plus four additional members, John Child (Website Organiser), Alison Warren (Publicity), Neil McIntyre (New Rider Coordinator), Helen Stewart and Marion Isaac. Our President is Elizabeth Palethorpe. The committee met on four occasions ( 17th July, 16th October 2025, 15 January and 30th April 2026).

### Events

The Tour of the Hills Audax was held on 10th August, the 43rd year in which this event has been staged by the club, and organised by Derek and Jill Ridyard. A strong entry of over 100 riders signed up. This event relies on a large number of volunteers to assist with catering and marshalling. The date for 2026 is 9th August and the event organiser is John Carolin. A small team has been set up to assist with catering logistics ahead of the event.

The Elstead Audaxes were held on 8th June, organised by Neil McIntyre and a team of volunteers. They consisted of the now traditional 100k, 150k and 200k rides from Surrey into Hampshire and Wiltshire. We had record entries for the three events with 115 riders registered for the day and only a single rider not being able to complete the course. There was universal positive feedback.

The date for 2026 is 7th June. AudaxUK celebrates its 50th anniversary this year and is focusing on raising numbers of female riders with the ambition of achieving 50% participation.

The Annual Dinner and Awards Presentation was held on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at Hoebridge Golf Club and attended by 44 members and guests.

### Rides Secretary's Report

Our club remains very active, we can see from the records of club events on Spond that in the calendar year 2025:

- The club staged 426 rides and related events.
- Active riders numbered 164 (including guests).
- With a total of just over 3,300 individual attendances recorded.

This impressive tally is broadly similar to 2024 and is thanks to the ongoing commitment of the club's Group Leaders who organise their group rides programme, and thanks to our Ride Leaders who volunteer to lead our rides across Surrey and adjacent counties, come rain or shine. Our club simply could not function without all their continuing enthusiastic and hard-working support.

The club has six weekend ride groups and six weekday groups (mostly on Wednesdays) that cater for a wide range of levels of cycling. The groups are well attended throughout the year, even during the chillier winter months. The Farnham based groups do tend to have lower numbers on their rides, but they are enjoyed by our members in that part of our patch. We continuously review how all the groups are getting on and we welcome input from all members on possible improvements.

Last year we inaugurated a new "social" ride group, GSS, to meet several objectives. These are half-day rides, taking place on alternative Saturdays. Start points are mostly, but not always, north of Guildford (e.g. Normandy, Pirbright, Send, Ripley ...). The rides have a relaxed and sociable G2/G3 pace which the leader will always adjust to suit the actual group of riders on the day. These rides replaced both the previous G3SM and G2WS groups. We aimed to make these rides an effective gateway into the club for new members. To that end, a committee member joins each ride to help welcome guests and potential new members, to help them find the right ride groups, and to encourage them to join and ride regularly with our club. Guests have indeed joined these rides but just as many go straight into other groups. We also recognised that many of our club rides have only a sole woman rider taking part or none, so we aimed to ensure that the GSS rides are ones where women riders can always expect to have female company. This is working well and there are almost always several women riders on each GSS ride. The final objective of introducing the GSS rides was to offer further options for G2 riders based in the northern part of our patch, but, thus far, this has not had much take up.

During the past year we have registered two new Ride Leaders with Cycling UK, namely Nic Crotch and David Harrison. We are very fortunate that each year several members step forward in this way to maintain the vitality of our club.

As 2025 came to an end two of our Group Leaders, of long standing, stepped down: Hilary Stephenson (G2M) and Phil Gasson (G3M). The club greatly appreciates the wonderful supportive leadership they have given over the years. We are also pleased to report that Les Roberts has taken over as Group Leader for G2M and Hans Sparkes for G3M. The club is very lucky to have members who are willing to take on these important roles.

In February 2026 we held a workshop for ride leaders which was well attended by 24 participants. The workshop included a Highway Code “Quiz” which saw teams discussing what various Highway Code rules and guidance mean for the organisation of club rides and other aspects of being considerate road users. There was also a facilitated whole-group discussion on managing incidents and accidents on rides. And finally, there was a presentation and Q&A covering several “tech” issues including route plotting software, the club’s online route library, and making the most of using the Spond app.

### **First Aid Training**

Nine members attended a first aid training course on 13 January 2026 and duly received their three year certificates. Four other members, of whom three remain covered by their last training course, also requested a place on the January course but priority was given to those who had not previously received training and the four are therefore on the waiting list for the next course. No new request have been received for the pocket first aid kits.

### **Awards**

. The following awards were presented at the Annual Dinner:

- The Golden Crank was awarded to Hilary Stephenson for her commitment to the club for over 30 years, a G2 ride leader and group organiser
- Keith Parfitt Memorial Pot was awarded to Phil Gasson who was the Rides Secretary and G3 group leader.
- The George Aylesbury Trophy for highest midweek turnout was awarded to Keith Stainer.
- The Benstead Cup for long service to the club as a committee member, G3 ride leader and setting up Spond app for ride organisation was awarded to Laurie Mutch
- The Bart Bartholomew trophy for the oldest rider completing the Danebury 150k Audax [The Reliability Century Ride] was awarded to Don Gray
- The Edwards Ladies Trophy was awarded to Angela Byrne
- The Bill Inder Trophy was awarded to Clive Richardson for his exceptional and unwavering support of the club’s Sunday rides.
- The Wooden Crank award was awarded to William Lowries

### **New Riders Report**

During 2025, 54 riders contacted the club in order to find out whether there was a good match, the highest level of enquiry for several years. This was sustained through the year, with the usual peak of interest in the summer months. Nearly all the interested riders came out on trial rides and a total of 23 eventually became members of Cycling UK and hence the

club. With over 40% of interested parties joining the club, this continues the level of success of recent years.

While our G2 group remains the main entry point for new members and while some always migrate to other groups within the club, there has been an increased level at G4, a faster cohort. More new members came from the Guildford area than elsewhere but riders from Farnham, Godalming, Woking and Farnborough were also well represented. The club attracts members through advertising but word of mouth continues to be the most effective means of attracting riders.

### **Club Communications**

The website continues to be central to all the club's activities and communications and members are encouraged to submit items to be published. Members who are signed up continue to receive additional communication by email as well as email notifications of new Blog or Latest news postings.

Club members are members of Cycling UK and enjoy access to many benefits. The club website provides a direct link to the benefits section on the Cycling UK website.

WhatsApp continues to be widely used by the club for general communication. Specific groups 'Buy & Sell' and 'Tech Chat' have been created which members can join if they so wish. The club social media accounts, Instagram and Facebook have regular posts which are moderated by WSCC. Both accounts can be accessed via logos on the home page of the club website as well as directly through Instagram and Facebook. The social media accounts play an important role in promoting the club as well as the Elstead Audaxes and Tour of the Hills. There is a West Surrey Cycling Club club on Strava, which can be accessed directly from Strava.

### **Club Kit**

We continue to keep a stock of club gilets (with rear pockets), both for new members and any existing members who are interested. We also have one each of Mens Short Sleeve and Long Sleeve tops (both XL) which were purchased to bring the Club Shop order up to the Minimum Order Quantities(MOQ). Any further orders have to achieve the MOQ of 5 of any single type.

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