



## **Friends of the Fallowfield Loop**

### **March 2007 Newsletter**

#### **National recognition for the Friends**

Members may have seen the article in the *Guardian* cycling supplement on 3 March featuring the Fallowfield Loop as the first of the urban routes described in the Guide, and celebrating the link between the different parks along its length. The piece by *Guardian* journalist Helen Pidd also acknowledged the work of the Friends in promoting the development of the Loop and other cycling routes within the city. Our thanks go to Cos for creating such a good impression that we were collectively described as the 'amiable' as well as 'hard-working' Friends. This is an image we shall do our best to maintain!

#### **Current campaigns**

##### **1. Didsbury to Chorlton spur**

Members will know that we have been campaigning for the past year to have the old Midland railway line between Didsbury and Chorlton converted to a pedestrian/cycle way. In January this year we wrote to all the councillors for the eight adjacent wards to canvass their support for the proposal, pointing out that it had already been envisaged in the City Council 1996 Unitary Development Plan for south Manchester. While a number of councillors were supportive of the proposal, many argued that it was premature in view of the inclusion of this section of line in the GMPTA's forthcoming bid to the Government's Transport Innovation Fund for Metrolink extension. In the light of this consideration, the Friends committee agreed to put the campaign on hold until the outcome of the bid was known later this year. In the meantime we would concentrate our efforts on a cycle route between Chorlton and Old Trafford (see next item).

##### **2. Chorlton to Old Trafford**

One of the arguments for the link between Didsbury and Chorlton is that it would enable a cycle through route to be developed from Stockport through to Old Trafford and on to Salford Quays. We are now concentrating on the north-western section of this route. Metrolink has categorically ruled out the possibility of a pedestrian/cycle way alongside the new Metro track between St. Werburgh's and Trafford Bar, so we have prospected an

alternative on/off road route using the alley behind the allotments between Manchester Road and the end of Warwick Road South (resurfacing would be needed). This route to Salford Quays will form part of the cycle ride we are planning for Sunday 25 March (see below). Its importance is enhanced by two developments in the pipeline. One is the development of the Bridgewater Way, which will make the Bridgewater Canal towpath more attractive and convenient for cycle and pedestrian use. The other is the proposed Irwell City Park project, which is planned to transform the riverside from Salford Quays to Peel Park 'into an accessible, attractive and vibrant waterfront'. We have invited Patrick Hanfling, the MCC representative on this project, to talk to us about it at our forthcoming members' meeting on March 19<sup>th</sup>, and all who are interested in this development are invited to come and hear him.

### **Tree planting**

As in previous years, the weather was kind for the now annual FotFL tree planting event, held this year on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> February. Eight volunteers from Sale and Altrincham Conservation Volunteers were joined by six of our members and three University students to help plant 25 each of Hornbeam, Hawthorn and Elder trees on the section from the Nelstrop Road bridge westwards towards Highfield Country Park. These were bare-rooted trees about 1.5 – 2m tall, which Cos and Dick bought from a nursery in Cadishead (at an amazingly low price of about 35p each!). We also planted 30 'whips' of Rowan and Cherry, left over from previous plantings and grown on in pots in members' gardens. Many thanks to the SAVC members for their continuing support – they enjoyed the event and are keen to keep it in their calendar. We enjoyed their company, expertise and exchange of ideas during a sunny lunchtime break and at the Sidings pub in Levenshulme afterwards.

### **Signs for bridges**

Do you know where you are on the Loop? One of the niggles of the route currently is that it is difficult for strangers to the area – and some locals – to work out which roads cross the route. We have had several discussions about this in the past, but now member Steve Keeney has prompted practical action by producing some laminated signs. We intend to fix these to bridges on the route in the future, in time for the spring cycling season. We also hope to complete fixing small signs on lamp-posts on roads leading to the Loop in Levenshulme and Fallowfield.

### **Temporary closure of the Loop at Stockport Road bridge**

We have been informed of the regrettable closure of the bridge under the Stockport Road for ten weeks from 12 March to enable necessary bridge repairs to be made. A diversion has been arranged using Carson Road, Errwood Road, Henderson Street, Mandeville Street, Stockport Road and Crayfield Road. We have insisted that this diversion should be signposted throughout its length, and we would urge members using it to let us know if it is unclear or proves difficult.

### **Spring rides**

**Sunday March 25:** to Salford Quays and environs and back, starting 11 am at Sherwood Street, 11.30 Chorlton Park Beechwood Ave entrance; 15 miles, on and off road, with pub stop for lunch. Contact David (tel. 445 1524)

**Sunday April 15:** ride organised by the Friends in the Chorlton Wanderers programme.  
Details will be circulated by email and on our website (Dick 224 3843)

**STOP PRESS** Members' meeting on Monday 19 March, 7.30 pm, at Union Chapel,  
Wellington Road, Fallowfield. Patrick Hanfling will talk about the Irwell City Park project,  
and we will discuss our campaigns and future events. ALL WELCOME!