



## **Friends of the Fallowfield Loop**

### **May 2007 Newsletter**

In this Newsletter we provide information about a number of new developments on or near the Loop, about other cycle campaigns in Manchester, and about future events. We also start a new series describing in detail rides which we have pioneered from the Loop, which we hope you will be able to try out on your own.

#### **New Developments**

##### **1. Burnage and Levenshulme.**

The first item in Manchester City Council's capital programme for cycling in the year 2007-8 is the creation of an off-road cycleway which will link the primary and high schools of Burnage and Levenshulme into the Loop. This is a recognition of how important the Loop could become for the promotion of safe journeying to school, and provides a model which we hope will be followed by similar developments at other points on the route.

##### **2. Chorlton and Salford Quays.**

We now have the full support of Sustrans and MCC cycling officers to designate the route from the Chorlton end of the Loop to Salford Quays as a properly signposted cycle route. However, it still requires support from Trafford MDC, since half the route falls under their jurisdiction, and we are working with Mark Stevenson (MCC) and Paul Thomas (Sustrans) to get their support. Metrolink has already agreed in principle to the use of the underpass at Old Trafford Metro station, providing that cyclists dismount while using it. In the meantime the route can be used by anyone, and you will find it amazingly quick since it goes more or less as the proverbial crow flies. For details of the route see Cycle Rides 1 on page 3 of this Newsletter.

##### **3. Outdoor BMX track in Platt Fields**

Financial and planning approval has just been given for the creation of a track for BMX and mountain bikes in Platt Fields Park, work on which will be completed by the end of this summer. The track is intended to be suitable for all levels of user, from beginners to elite racers, and it is hoped to have coaching available for all ages. The track will be supervised by a BMX club to be based in the park. The organisers are appealing for volunteers to help with coaching, running events and supporting the club.

At a recent meeting of the Manchester Cycle Forum concern was expressed about how users would get to the track. If it proves as attractive as others elsewhere, it could have the paradoxical effect of increasing the volume of car traffic along the already congested Wilmslow Road, with limited on-site parking available. The park is, however, only a stone's throw from the Loop, which provides an obvious access route for cyclists, at least for those travelling from east or west of the city.

### **Love Your Bike Campaign**

Friends of the Earth Manchester have just completed the first year of their award-winning campaign to improve opportunities and facilities for cyclists in the city, under the slogan *Love Your Bike*. They have an interactive website [www.loveyourbike.org](http://www.loveyourbike.org) which has been extensively used to provide comments from cyclists and would-be cyclists on a number of issues of concern. A survey of the reasons why respondents don't cycle to work came up with the following figures:

- No safe route for cycling to work: 61%*
- Traffic levels too high: 52%*
- No changing or showering facilities at work: 32%*
- Not fit enough: 25%*
- No secure bike parking at work: 13%*
- Bad weather: 10%*
- Distance too great: 6%*

Their report issues a number of challenges to the City Council, of which the following are the main ones:

- Materially improve and expand the cycle lane network
- Design junctions so that the safety of cyclists is preserved
- Act to make other road users aware of the needs of cyclists
- Provide quality cycle parking
- Improve access to stations, secure storage and the carriage of bikes on public transport

I'm sure our own members would echo these concerns and challenges from their own experience. The LYB full report can be accessed from the website above.

### **Future events**

**Sunday 13 May:** social ride along the Loop from Debdale to the Mersey Valley and back, with a stop for lunch, organised as part of the Manchester 100 Days campaign. Times: 11 am, Debdale Park by the boathouse; 11.15, Highfield Country Park entrance; 11.35, Sherwood Street; 12 noon, Chorlton Park, Beechwood Avenue entrance. Route thereafter depending on the weather. Back to Debdale by 3 pm. Families with children welcome. Further details from David, tel. 445 1524.

**Monday 21 May:** members' meeting 7.30 pm, Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield. All welcome.

**16-24 June:** Manchester Bike Week, starting with an official launch/opening event on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> in central Manchester. Details of this and all the week's events can be accessed at [www.manchester.gov.uk/transport/events/bikeweek/](http://www.manchester.gov.uk/transport/events/bikeweek/)  
On **Friday 22 June** we shall be running our annual evening bicicrawl to hostelryes around the Loop, beginning at 6 pm. Details to be emailed by Dick, also tel 224 3843