



## **Friends of the Fallowfield Loop**

**Newsletter March 2008**

### **Tree planting day**

A successful tree-planting day was held on Sunday 17 February in crisp winter weather along the southern bank of the Loop between the Chorlton end and Alexandra Road South. A total of 28 volunteers from the Friends and the Sale and Altrincham Conservation Volunteers took part. We planted over 140 trees, including 24 large specimens (crab apple, Victoria plum, wild cherry, rowan, alder and beech), 100 whips (hawthorn, hornbeam, holly and more wild cherry) and 24 shrubs (buddleia and dogwood). Ten bags of litter were also collected and disposed of. We erected an awning and stall at the Withington Road entrance, and were able to do a good promotion job for the Loop and the Friends with passers-by from the area. Many thanks to Dick Venes and Julian Fox for organising the event, and a special thanks to all those who took part.

Some concern was expressed by two visitors from the Friends of Chorlton Ees who helped with the litter collection, that the trees might spoil the environment for wild flowers. Hopefully we reassured them by pointing out that we would be a) removing some invasive small saplings to compensate, and b) planting extra wild flowers as part of the Chorlton Park Ward cash grant programme, which also paid for the trees.

### **Lecterns along the Loop**

In the January Newsletter we reported our success with the grant application to the Transport Thematic Partnership, to install informational lecterns at key junctions along the Loop. We now have an agreed design for the lectern content (thanks to Zoosigns) and the metal lecterns have been ordered. We hope to have them installed before the end of March, so look out for them if you are using the Loop in the Easter period.

In the same grant we also received money to reprint the Community Mapping guide to the Loop (10,000 copies), and we shall be planning some collective distribution events at the next members' meeting on Monday March 17<sup>th</sup>. If you can help with these events, or can deliver some leaflets individually to homes adjacent to the Loop, or have useful contacts in adjacent schools, health centres and so on, can we renew our appeal to contact the secretary (445 1524, but note that he'll be away till 17

March). We will circulate details of the collective events by email. Enclosed is a copy of the new leaflet, hot off the press.

We are grateful to Sustrans and Paul Thomas of the Manchester office for advancing us a loan to enable us to carry out these TTP projects, since grants under this scheme are only paid retrospectively, and the cost is way beyond our normal budget.

### **Levenshulme section clean-up**

Members will no doubt have read the complaints of Levenshulme residents at what they see as the neglect of their area by the Council, and the list of 'grot spots' which they have posted to the Council leader. So it is timely that we have joined up with local residents' groups through the good offices of committee member Councillor Alec Cowan, and with the help of Environmental Street Manager Steve Jennings, to arrange a clean-up day for the Levenshulme section of the Loop on **Sunday 6 April** from 10.30 till 3 pm. Tom from Sustrans will be providing a van, Steve will provide two skips (one has proved insufficient in the past!), and Bill Crowther will give the event publicity. We hope to enlist the support of the Community Service people as on our last clean-up in November. Help from members will be much appreciated, so please note the date for your diaries. Reminders will be sent out by email.

### **News from Sustrans**

Three items will be of interest to members from the latest Sustrans newsletter (*The Hub*). First, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) has made recommendations to the Government for the first time on land use and transport planning, namely that, to enable people to lead a healthy and active life, they should prioritise the creation of comprehensive walking and cycling networks, and reallocate road space accordingly. Sustrans played an active part in this outcome.

Secondly, and in the light of the above, Sustrans is opposing the creation of a high speed bus route alongside the pioneering greenway between Bristol and Bath, which is one of the most popular routes on the national cycle network. Sustrans is not against public transport, but argues that it should not be developed in a way that degrades the quality of existing walking and cycling routes – 'robbing Peter to pay Paul'. This has wider implications, for example there is talk of reviving the Manchester to Sheffield rail route through Woodhead, which currently forms part of the Trans-Pennine Trail. And of course we will be working to ensure that the proposed Metro station at St. Werburgh's does not interfere with our own Loop access to Chorlton. Those wanting to support the Bristol-Bath petition can find it at [www.sustrans.org.uk/bristolbath](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/bristolbath)

Thirdly, John Grimshaw is retiring as Chief Executive of Sustrans after thirty years in the saddle. We salute his achievements and wish him well for the future.

### **Future events not already mentioned**

**Sunday 9 March:** Chorlton Wanderers' bike ride, organised by the Friends, to Werneth Low and back via the Loop and roads. 30 miles approx., pub stop for lunch. Start 10 am Chorlton Water Park car park.

**Monday 17 March:** Members' meeting, 7.30 pm at Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield. Planning a spring programme of events, all members welcome.