



The spring/summer season finds more and more people using the Loop, whether as joggers, cyclists or walkers, with or without dogs. It is difficult to know precisely how much our efforts to improve the Loop and to publicise its existence and value have contributed to this increased use, but they surely must have helped. And we are continuing our efforts, as the reports in this Newsletter show.

Chorlton's Big Green Festival

Chorlton's Big Green Festival – a not-for-profit event that celebrated all things Green, from plants to solar panels, eco-artists to pedal-powered generators – was held at St. Clement's Church on Saturday 4th April. The festival, organised by Action for Sustainable Living (www.afsl.org.uk), aimed to be an entertaining exploration of ways to incorporate sustainability into everyday living, and the Friends were fortunate enough to be granted a stall at the event. On the day we were joined by Mike Dagley, Sustrans Volunteer Ranger Co-ordinator for the North of England. The Festival was a huge success, with an estimated two thousand plus interested individuals attending the event, and there are plans to repeat it next year.

The Friends/Sustrans stall was in a prime position and we had a constant stream of enquiries from attendees. Our main aim was to pass on information about the Loop, and we handed a couple of hundred maps of the route to a range of people – from those new to the area who knew nothing about the Loop to those who had some knowledge of it but did not realise how long it was. We were also able to reassure enquirers that Metrolink have agreed to maintain the Chorlton access route both during the extension work and once the new line is running to the St. Werburgh's Road terminus. Our thanks to all who staffed the Friends stall and to AFSL for organising such a popular, community-focused, event which was well received by all who participated.

Grant News

1. Sculture project. As reported in previous issues, the Awards for All Lottery grant project by Levenshulme artist Rachel Ramchurn to create a series of public sculptures for the Loop is well under way. The nearly finished abstract sculptures comprise a family group inspired by drawings Rachel made on the Loop. They consist of a 'Man', 'Woman' and 'Child', each bearing its own individual characteristics – the 'Man' is very angular, with straight smooth sides, the 'Woman' is very curvaceous and the much shorter 'Child' is a mix of the two adults. They were sculpted from grey poplar trees felled in Highfield Park because of problems to

housing foundations. On 3rd May a 'Cycle for a Site' ride took place, and it was agreed that the sculptures should be kept together in a family group. A site was chosen opposite St. Andrews Primary school near the lattice bridge in Levenshulme, and all being well installation should take place within the next few weeks (date to be announced).

Rachel also held two successful workshop events during April, 'Art in the Park', in Highfield Park, where the public was encouraged to come and make their own sculptures using natural materials they found around them. The weather for both was sunny, and large numbers took part, especially families with children. Rachel also held a teachers' workshop encouraging schools to make sculptures from nature. For images and information from the workshop go to www.theflsp.blogspot.com, and to keep up with the project development go to www.rachelramchurn.blogspot.com and www.cycle-routes.org/fallowfieldloopleftine. The intention behind the project is to create an experience that will inspire and energise people to care for and protect the Loop, Highfield Park and surrounding areas. We are grateful to Rachel for devising such an imaginative project and carrying it out so successfully.

2. Bridge signing. The Transport Thematic partnership grant to install street name-plates on all the road bridges crossing the Loop has been in abeyance since February, due to gross delay by MCC in sending us an invoice for the completed signs. Now that this has at last been received, we hope to win a supplementary grant to enable the plates to be properly fixed during the summer.

3. Ward cash grant. We have just received news of a cash grant from Old Moat Ward to install another informational lectern, this time at the Sherwood Street entrance to the Loop. Although our experience with the existing lecterns is that they are vulnerable to graffiti, and need regular cleaning, we believe that they remain a valuable addition to the other informational resources available to users.

Dog Mess Bins and the Loop

To encourage dog owners to dispose of waste we feel that dog waste bins should be installed at access points by the Loop, on the street side where the Council would take the responsibility for maintaining them. If you would like to see this done in your local area, we suggest that you make a request to the Council either online at: https://secure.manchester.gov.uk/site/scripts/xforms_form.php?formID=160 or telephone the 'Environment On Call' helpline on 0161 954 9000.

Manchester Bike Week Events organised by the Friends

Sunday 14 June: In collaboration with the Mersey Valley Wardens, a ride along the TPT from Chorlton to Stockport and Reddish Vale (lunch stop), back via the Loop. 20 miles. Meet Chorlton Water Park Visitors' Centre, 10 am. More from Cos Harnasz.

Friday 19 June: Adult social ride, 14 miles with pub visits, meet Lloyds Hotel, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton, 6-6.20 pm. Full schedule later from Dick Venes.

Sunday 21 June: Loop the Loop round the Manchester Cycleway/Loop, starting Chorlton Park Beechwood Ave 11 am, Albert Square 11.45, Debdale boathouse 12.45, Highfield Park 1 pm, finishing Chorlton Park around 2 pm with picnic.

Stop Press. Members' meeting, next Monday 18 May 7.30 pm, Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield. Summer events to be arranged. All welcome.