



### **Bridge signs**

At long last the permanent street name signs have been put up on all the road bridges crossing the Loop (or nearly all!), thanks to the work of Tom and colleagues from Sustrans and a grant from Manchester City Council. One of the conditions of the grant was that we conduct a survey to assess the value of the signs to users, and we have taken the opportunity to extend this into a more general survey about use of the Loop. To date we have conducted surveys of passers-by at the Ladybarn Lane bridge and the Athol Road entrance, and among riders on the Chorlton Wanderers' ride in October. We are completing the survey with a postal survey to members of the Friends, and this is included with the Newsletter. It takes only a few minutes to complete. We would appeal to you to complete it and return it to the Hon Sec in the sae enclosed. A summary of the findings from all the surveys will be circulated with the next Newsletter.

### **Relations with community groups**

Part of our development programme is to strengthen our links with community groups and other voluntary associations bordering on the Loop or related to our work. In this context we felt it would be useful to know which other groups and associations our members belong to or are involved with, and two questions are included in the questionnaire asking about this. Obviously it will help us with future planning if you include your name with the return, but if you wish your return to remain anonymous then feel free to leave this question blank.

### **Big clean-up event**

The Friends held a 'route spruce-up' event on Saturday 7 November between Yew Tree Road and St. Werburgh's Road. Taking part were FotFL members, Emma Hopkinson (the MCC street environment manager for Chorlton and Whalley Range) and a group from the Community payback programme, as well as assistance from Tom the Sustrans warden. The weather on the day was excellent and a great deal was achieved. We repainted the Alexandra Road bridge and removed items of rubbish, both large and small, from the sides of the route. In addition we cut back some encroaching vegetation to make the new road signs more visible, cleaned up the lecterns and removed a thick carpet of decaying leaf matter from the surface of the route around the Athol Road entrance. We would particularly like to thank Emma for her help in organising the Council input to the day. One encouraging feature was that

the larger items removed were of long standing, and little extra had appeared on the route since the last big clean-up of this area several years ago.

## **Connect 2 Celebration Ride**

Back in December 2007 many of our members voted to support the Sustrans 'Connect 2' bid for £50 million from the Big Lottery Fund, which was won successfully. Among schemes in the Greater Manchester area which are now coming to completion from this fund is the Bridgewater Canal towpath improvement connecting Stretford and Sale. We are planning a family ride to explore and celebrate this new route on Sunday 29 November, starting at 11 am from Sainsbury's car park in Fallowfield, proceeding via the Loop to the Beechwood Road entrance to Chorlton Park (11.20), and then following the Trans-Pennine trail to the Bridgewater Canal. We will follow the newly improved section to Sale, and from there back to Trafford Water Park, making a café stop at the Mersey valley visitor centre. The route is about 13 miles in total (20k for the metrically inclined), and will be suitable for all ages. Children should be accompanied by a responsible adult. Do join us!

## **Two further Sustrans campaigns to support**

*Motion for Women* Of the 2% of all journeys made by bike in the UK (Netherlands 27%), only a quarter are made by women (over half in the Netherlands). Last year Sustrans surveyed over 1000 women to find out what they believed would most persuade them to cycle more. Overwhelmingly women wanted more cycle lanes physically separated from the rest of the traffic. As a result Sustrans is organising a petition demanding that governments prioritise the creation of environments that encourage cycling, specifically the separation of cycle paths from the rest of the traffic. This will benefit everyone, not just women, so everyone can sign the petition at [www.bikebelles.org.uk](http://www.bikebelles.org.uk) and we are encouraged to do so before the closing date of the end of November.

*The Wave* Sustrans has joined 100 or more organisations in Stop Climate Chaos, to organise a mass demonstration flowing through the streets of London on 5 December, days ahead of the UN's climate summit in Copenhagen, demanding action now on climate change. Details of the event and how to take part can be found at [www.stopclimatechaos.org/the-wave](http://www.stopclimatechaos.org/the-wave)

## **Future FotFL events**

**Monday 16 November:** Members' meeting, 7.30 pm, at the Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield. All welcome.

**Sunday 29 November:** Connect 2 Celebration Ride (details above). Join at Sainsbury's at 11 am or Chorlton Park at 11.20.

**Sunday 3 January 2010:** New Year ride, starting from Chorlton Park, Beechwood Road entrance at 11.30 am, and riding along the length of the Loop for a lunch stop at the Vale Cottage pub in Gorton. Other joining points can be at Sainsbury's 12 noon, Highfield at 12.15 pm. Why not exercise your New Year resolution by biking it?

