

Now that the weather is becoming more spring-like, if not actually summery, we hope you are all enjoying walks and rides along the Loop. Here are some rides that we are organising or assisting with over the next month, and you are all very welcome to join us:

**Sunday May 23:** Four canals and two football grounds. This is an exciting new circular route, involving the whole of the Loop, United and City football grounds, the city centre via the Ship Canal and the Bridgewater, Rochdale and Ashton canals, and passing many parks. It is mostly off-road, with refreshment and picnic stops on the way. Participants should be comfortable with the narrow towpath along some sections of the canals. Start 10.30 am at Sainsbury's car park, 11 am at the Beechwood Ave entrance to Chorlton Park. More details from David on 0161 445 1524.

**Friday June 18:** We kick off national bike week (officially 19 to 27 June) with an adult social ride starting from the Spread Eagle, Wilbraham Road, Chorlton at 6 pm, and visiting pubs along the canal to Sale and returning via Sale Water Park and Jackson's Boat. Details from Dick on 0161 224 3843.

**Sunday June 20:** Our traditional 'Loop the Loop' circuit from Chorlton along the Loop and Manchester Cycleway to Debdale park, Sport City and the city centre, returning to Chorlton via quiet roads through Hulme. Start from Chorlton Park, Beechwood Ave entrance at 11 am, Sainsbury's carpark 11.30.

**Sunday June 27:** Mersey Valley Wardens' ride from Chorlton Water Park (10am) along the Trans-Pennine trail to Stockport and Reddish Vale and back via the Loop (see [www.merseyvalley.org.uk](http://www.merseyvalley.org.uk)).

Further details of these rides will be circulated via email and posted on our website in due course.

#### **Other rides:**

- Rides of various length in south Manchester are organised by Skyrides at weekends throughout May and June (see [www.goskyride.com/find-a-ride/](http://www.goskyride.com/find-a-ride/)).
- The Chorlton Wanderers run longer rides on the second Sunday of each month, starting at 10 am from Chorlton Water Park. June 13, Tour de Macclesfield, 50 miles; July 11, Swettenham, 45 miles.
- A baton relay to celebrate the 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the Trans-Pennine Trail is being organised from 15-17 June: 15<sup>th</sup>, Trafford to Manchester; 16<sup>th</sup>, Reddish vale to Broadbottom; 17<sup>th</sup>, Broadbottom to Dunford Bridge.

## **News on and about the Loop**

- Sustrans is organising a team of 15 unemployed young people with government funding to spend up to six months working on the Loop under the manager Peter Clothier. Our longstanding priority to have the Lattice Bridge at Highfield Park refurbished seems likely to be included in their work programme. Please say Hi to them if you see them at work.
- A new information lectern has been installed at the Mauldeth Road/Princess Road entrance to mark the spot where aircraft parts were unloaded from goods trains in the First World War to supply the airfield at Hough End Fields. Thanks to our archivist Cos Harnasz for promoting this.
- Our efforts over many years to maintain a viable route through the new Metro line at St. Werburgh's Road in Chorlton have been rewarded with plans now taking shape not only to preserve the Loop access from Sidbury Road but to open a new one from St. Werburgh's Road itself. The accompanying map shows the proposed new layout. You may already have enjoyed using the new tarmac surface under the road bridge.
- Similar efforts to secure a quiet route from the Chorlton end of the Loop to Salford Quays have also borne fruit, with plans at the Trafford end to improve the route from Warwick Road South onwards (see accompanying map). The route through Chorlton is now signposted from the end of the Loop, along Albany Road to the Unicorn, across at the pedestrian lights and through to Oswald Road, at the top end of which there is a hidden alley entrance through to Warwick Road South. We will follow this route in the ride on May 23.
- The Friends ran stalls at the Chorlton Big Green Festival on 27 March and the Platt Fields Centenary Festival on 8 May. These enabled us not only to promote awareness of the Loop and cycling opportunities in Manchester, but to make useful contact with other campaigning groups. We plan to run another stall at the Chorlton Park Summer Festival on Saturday 10 July. Offers to help us with this would be most welcome.
- Now that the Connect2 project to improve the towpath of the Bridgewater Canal for cycle use through Stretford and Sale has been successfully completed, there will be a launch week organised by Sustrans from May 31 on the canal in Sale. Details from Peter Green on 0161 923 6050.

## **Stop Press**

There will be the usual bi-monthly members' meeting next Monday 17 May at the Union Chapel, Wellington Road Fallowfield, at 7.30 pm. The agenda will include discussion of possible new grant applications, our response to the consultation document on the District Centre Plan for Fallowfield, our own priorities for the summer, and any issues raised by members. You are all welcome.