

## **Levenshulme Festival**

As part of the festival we ran a stall at the old Levenshulme station site on 23<sup>rd</sup> October and enjoyed a steady stream of visitors, especially for help with bike maintenance from our own 'Bike Doctor', Dick Venes. Our Chair, Sandy Broadhurst, had worked with St. Andrews primary school to arrange a children's bike ride to Debdale and back as part of the event. This proved a highly successful initiative, with enthusiastic parent support, and we hope to consolidate our contacts with the school in future.

## **Knotweed Busters**

At last we seem to have found a sure-fire way of getting rid of Japanese Knotweed safely, by chemical injection at the base of each stem. On 2<sup>nd</sup> November three of our members got kitted out with injection guns and white suits under the supervision of Peter Green from Sustrans, and tackled some of the largest concentrations of Knotweed along the Loop. Many thanks to Cos for taking the photo below for the archive, and for taking on the second shift of the day. From L to R are David, Peter and Charlotte celebrating by a patch west of Yew Tree Road.

## **Community Orchard**

The good news is that we have won a small grant from the Big Tree Fund to support the planting and maintenance of a community orchard on the old Levenshulme station site. This will supplement the contribution from our own funds, together with payment in kind from Sustrans to help with digging on the site. The less good news is that we learnt only late in the day that there is a water main running under our chosen quadrant bordering Crayfield Road, and that United Utilities may be able to exercise a prohibition on planting in that precise area, even though they do not own the land. They are already planning to fell the mature trees on the west side adjacent to Crayfield Road. At the same time the south side of the Loop path was earmarked some time ago by Railway paths (the property arm of Sustrans) for possible income generation, and it is not clear whether they will agree to an orchard on that side. We are as a matter of urgency seeking clarification on these issues, in time for a site visit and inspection by all those interested in the project on Saturday 3 December.

The orchard proposal has been greeted with great enthusiasm by local residents and community groups, and we have received more than twenty expressions of interest and offers of help from people in the area. Once the uncertainty over the precise site has been resolved, we shall circulate a timetable of activities – clearing, digging, planting, etc. – to members via email. Colin Bennett from our committee is hoping to run one or more workshops on grafting onto rootstocks over the course of the winter.

## **Clear-up by Sainsbury's**

The bank opposite Sainsbury's car park in Fallowfield has long been something of an eyesore, with discarded cans, jars, bottles and cartons littering the area. It is not helped by the fact that ownership of the bank is unclear. On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November we had a major clean-up of the site, and also thinned out some of the buddleia bushes so as to allow more wild flowers to grow. Many thanks to all those who gave their time to help with the work.

## **Future events**

**Monday 21 November:** Bi-monthly members' meeting, 7.30 pm, at the Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield. All are welcome.

**Saturday 3 December:** Orchard site visit, 12 noon, at the old Levenshulme station, access from Crayfield Road. Do come if you are interested in the orchard project.

**Monday 2 January, 2012:** New Year ride along the Loop, time and location to be circulated later by email.