

A Happy New Year to all our readers and good wishes for your continued enjoyment of the Loop in 2012, whether as walker, cyclist or jogger. There are only two items of note to report since the last newsletter:

Renovation of the Lattice Bridge at Highfield

Peter Green from the Greater Manchester office of Sustrans has secured £30,000 from the winding up of the Links to Schools project, to enable a full renovation of the Lattice Bridge to be undertaken, including the brickwork and metal structure. Since this has been one of the Friends' longstanding priorities for the improvement of the Loop, we are delighted to assist by acting as conduit for receipt of the funding. Eddie Johnson, our honorary President and historian of the former railway, has advised that the company colour of the old Great Central, a medium green, would be most appropriate for the paintwork. Work is expected to be completed during the spring.

Community orchard, old Levenshulme station

At a site meeting on 3 December it was agreed that the south-east quadrant of the site (bordering Kersh Avenue, Marley Lane and Broom Lane) would now be the most suitable for the proposed orchard, given the difficulties with the Crayfield Road side mentioned in the November newsletter. We have provisionally booked the Sale and Altrincham Conservation Volunteers to help us and local residents with clearing the site and planting, respectively on Sundays 19 February and 18 March. At our members' meeting this coming Monday we will decide a more detailed timetable for work to be undertaken, and circulate everyone by email. At our last meeting it was agreed that we would seek sponsors for a tree, at £10 each, to enable us to purchase best quality trees from a local provider (Bud Garden Centre, Omer Drive, Burnage), and purchases have now been made of apples, pears, cherries and plums. If any of our members living near the area would like to sponsor a tree (with name tags to go on the chosen tree) a form is printed overleaf.

Future events

Monday 16 January: Members' meeting, 7.30 pm, Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield. We will be planning a full list of events through the spring. All welcome.

Sunday 12 February: Dick Venes will lead a Chorlton Wanderers ride along the Loop to the Denton area and back, 25 miles. Start Chorlton Water Park, 10 am.

Sundays 19 February and 18 March: work days at the orchard site in Fallowfield. Further details to be circulated by email.