



Newsletter September 2015

*At the AGM and a subsequent committee meeting earlier this month we agreed a list of activities for the remainder of the year. Please note them in your diaries, and let the designated contact person know if you can help. We are always grateful for members' contributions to maintaining and improving our wonderful Fallowfield Loop, for which we have stewardship along with Sustrans.

This Saturday, 19 September

We are holding a short festival for families and children to celebrate the Loop, and to coincide with an international Kidical Mass Ride. We will be riding from Ladybarn Lane (set off 2 pm) to Highfield Country Park for a picnic there. The return will start at 4 pm. The barriers along the Loop will be open from 10 am till the end of the ride, to make it easier for children and bulkier bikes. All ages are welcome. We are in negotiation with Sustrans about a much longer trial period for opening the barriers, providing safety concerns can be met. Our thanks to Lorenza Casini and Paul Burrow for arranging Saturday's event.

Also this Saturday we will be staffing a stall at Levenshulme market to promote the Friends and also Sustrans, from 11 till 4. If you can help with an hour or so please contact our chair Pam Flynn.

Next Monday, 21 September

Our bi-monthly members' meeting will be held at the Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield, starting at 7.30 pm. This gives everyone a chance to raise and discuss issues relating to the Loop and our activities. This month we will welcome Beverley Budgen, who has recently taken over from Peter Green as Sustrans routes manager. Beverley is keen to meet as many members as possible. A small refreshment will be available in the form of this year's blackberry and apple from the Loop.

Saturday 31 October

This is the proposed date for installing three new raised beds alongside the three already in place on the Levenshulme quadrant adjacent to Crayfield Road. We will set the beds in place and fill them with soil and compost, ready for members of Incredible Edible Levenshulme to do the planting (veg, herbs and soft fruit) on the following Monday. If time allows we will also weed the existing beds and clear some of the saplings from the area. The suggested start is 10.30 am (the clocks will be back by then!). Offers of help please to David Beetham or Paul Burroughs.

November (exact dates to be decided)

Sculptor Rachel Ramchurn is planning to hold a participatory educational art event for children on the quadrants one weekend this month. Details will be circulated in due course. Rachel won a grant a few years back to create the family sculpture in wood which is situated in the grassy area by the sump near the lattice bridge (opposite the Highfield Park entrance), and we welcome this latest initiative of hers.

Also one weekend in November we will hold our regular autumn rolling clean-up of the Loop. Suggestions for where we should concentrate our attention are welcome to David as above. Again details will be circulated nearer the time.

Sunday 3 January 2016

An important date for your diaries will be our regular New Year wassail celebration at the Levenshulme orchard, starting at dusk. Although this is not strictly Twelfth Night, it is the nearest to that significant closing date of the festival period. Planning for the event has already begun, and ideas and/or contributions can be forwarded to Cos Harnasz, our regular host for the occasion.

Looking Back

Now looking back on the summer, here are some items to record:

At the AGM in July Luca Conte was appointed to the committee in addition to its existing members. Luca has been responsible for organising our Facebook and contacts.

Paul Burroughs organised volunteers for two work sessions in August and September, one working by and under the lattice bridge, the other clearing saplings etc. on the bank east of Ladybarn Lane.

David Beetham led a ride on the bank holiday Sunday in August, which included the Bridgewater, Rochdale and Ashton canals through and out of the city centre, returning via the Loop. Only two days before an old mill had collapsed onto the Bridgewater canal towpath near Castlefield, but prompt information from a member enabled a route round the closed section to be found before the ride took place.

Looking Forward

Over the past year substantial improvements have been made to waterside routes accessible from the Loop. These include the Bridgewater Canal towpath into Castlefield, the Ashton Canal towpath east of Fairfield, and the TPT route along the Mersey from East Didsbury to Stockport. Future newsletters will explore these improved routes, with guidance on how to reach them from the Loop.