



## Newsletter November 2015

### **Kidical Massive Rides on the Loop**

Since the last newsletter members Lorenza Cassini and Giselle Du Toit have organised two Kidical Massive rides along the Loop, on Saturdays 19 September and 31 October. Kidical Mass is an organisation that was started in Eugene, Oregon, USA in 2008 to promote family biking in cities. (The name was intended to mirror the slogan of 'critical mass' in campaigns to expand the number of cyclists to create a step change in road users' perceptions and behaviour). The idea is that, by organising group rides, families will feel more comfortable about riding on their own, and incorporate biking into their travel to school and work choices. The ride on 19 September formed part of the first ever global event, with rides taking place in cities across the world, and aiming to show 'that cities that plan for family biking are more liveable, sustainable, profitable and FUN'.

Lorenza contributes the following about the September ride: 'On Saturday 19 September the world celebrated family-friendly cycling through the event "Kidical Massive". Members of the Friends wanted to be part of this fantastic initiative and got together to organise our very own Kidical Massive ride along our traffic-free Fallowfield Loop. On the day, assisted by a perfect September day – warm and dry – thirty children and their families came together to enjoy this friendly and fun ride. The ride left the Ladybarn entrance at around 2 pm and reached the Quadrants in Levenshulme and Highfield Country park, where riders enjoyed a picnic pitstop. The 1.5 mile ride enabled many children to pedal under their own steam! The ride was also enabled by the opening of the barriers along the Loop. Many bikes of all shapes and sizes were thus able to take part. Two feeder rides were led from Alexandra Park and Platt Fields Park, and many more users were able to enjoy an accessible Loop from morning till dusk. Photos of the ride can be seen at [www.flickr.com/photos/manchesterfoe/albums/72157658411857359](http://www.flickr.com/photos/manchesterfoe/albums/72157658411857359) '

The October ride had similar numbers, and more are planned for next year. Our thanks to Lorenza and Giselle and their helpers for this significant initiative, and to Dick Venes for opening and closing the barriers (see the next item).

## **Barriers along the Loop**

In cooperation with Sustrans we are putting together a plan for a trial opening of the internal barriers (not the access ones) on successive Sundays and Mondays from April next year. The Kidical Mass rides have shown the value of enabling 'bikes of all shapes and sizes' to use the cycleway unimpeded, as well as mobility vehicles for disabled users. After an assessment of the experiment, a more sustained period of opening will be considered.

## **Waterside Rides from the Loop: Ashton and Peak Forest Canals**

Besides our work on the Fallowfield Loop itself, we aim to alert members to other off-road routes that can be easily accessed from the Loop. Many of you will already know about the path from Debdale that takes you to the Ashton Canal travelling west to Sports City and Piccadilly. This path is accessed by turning Left down the steep incline signposted to the Debdale Water Park, but turning Right rather than Left at the bottom of the incline and keeping straight on for three miles to the Ashton Canal. Less well known is the longer circular route you can take incorporating the Ashton and Peak Forest Canals and the River Tame in Reddish Vale and back to the Loop at Longford Road West.

Here is how you can do it. Ride eastwards to the very end of the Loop through the new housing estate at Fairfield. This brings you out at the railway bridge by Fairfield station. Cross the bridge and take the first right into Clarendon Road. At the end of the road go across the busy Audenshaw Road and you will come to the Ashton Canal, where you turn Right. This section of towpath has been upgraded and resurfaced all the way to the junction with the Peak Forest Canal. There turn right onto the PF towpath, which offers a pleasant ride for several miles down to Hyde. At Hyde the towpath crosses the canal. Here is a section of half a mile or so which has been notoriously muddy, but is now being resurfaced and should in future be less problematic. After crossing back over the canal watch out for the opening to the Right of the towpath with a notice 'Reddish Vale Country Park'. Go down the steep track carefully and at the bottom you will join the Trans-Pennine Trail going downstream alongside the River Tame. From there follow the TPT signs all the way to the Reddish Vale Visitor Centre, but be prepared for a short uphill main road section, a housing estate and a horse-riding school on the way, plus a bridge across the M60. At the Visitor Centre turn Right up Mill Lane and work your way across the main Gorton Road to join Longford Road West, at the end of which you will find an entrance to the Loop on the Right. This makes for a very pleasant round of fifteen miles plus, depending on where you start from. Other off-road routes accessible from the Loop will be posted in future newsletters.

## **Stop Press**

Our November members' meeting will be held next **Monday 16 November at 7.30 pm**, at the Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield. All are welcome to what are usually lively discussions. And please don't forget to note in your diaries **Sunday 3 January** at sundown for our yearly orchard wassail at the Levenshulme Quadrants.

By the time of the next newsletter in January, the crucial Paris climate summit will have taken place and the year 2016 will already be upon us! I hope we can all make our own contribution through our walking and cycling to our local environment as well as to a less polluted planet.