



Next meeting
7.30-9.00pm
Monday 20th
November 2017.

Union Chapel
Wellington Road
Fallowfield
M14 6EQ

Hello and welcome to the final newsletter of 2017.

Over this year an amazing number of people hours have gone into the maintenance and development of the Fallowfield Loop. This is in addition to the work that Tom, the Sustrans Maintenance worker, does on a daily basis and the large-scale work that has been taking place in connection with water management along Fallowfield/Shaw Brook. We are also looking to see how several plans in relation to Levenshulme Station and Quadrants will develop. There should be updates about these at the meeting on 20th November. I hope you enjoy reading about some of the things that have been taking place.

Thursday Floop Task Days

Ian Barker is our Sustrans link volunteer and he has been running the Thursday Task Days on the first and third Thursday of every month throughout the year. The activity varies each session. On Thursday 2nd November this involved work on the North West Quadrant at Levenshulme. The task was to dig out the rubble – bricks, stone, tarmac that was exposed or very near the surface, removing the remaining stumps of small trees, pruning the large hawthorn and cutting back the surrounding undergrowth. The purpose of this work was to have a bigger patch of grass in this area that can be kept mown short, and so provide a larger and more useful area for local activities.

Ian is extremely thorough in how he plans the activities and also in recording the outcomes and achievements that the task days have produced. Recently he circulated photos of the Abbey Hey Maze that was planted last March. It was so satisfying to see that all the saplings have taken and how the project is settling in.

For more information about these task days, which run from 10.00am to 1.30pm, contact Ian (Sustrans volunteer) 0161 442 4039 & 07923 512 409, or email Abigail at the Sustrans Office abigail.pound@sustrans.org.uk

3rd Edition Map and Information Leaflet

Over the summer we undertook a wide-reaching distribution of the new map and information leaflet to various community venues and to houses adjacent to the Fallowfield Loop. Thank you to everyone who took part and made this possible.

Massive Success for Abbey Hey litter pick despite Storm Brian
Old Stockport Canal Path Clean-up
21st –23rd October

Early in the summer Charles Kinniburgh, a regular volunteer on the Task Days, came up with the idea of initiating a community litter pick event along the whole of the Old Stockport Canal Path. People may also know this route as The Yellow Brick Road and/or National Cycle Route 60 - Debdale to the Ashton Canal stretch. Charles worked with a number of groups to bring this event about in October, these included Manchester University, Gorton Community Centre, Sustrans and Friends of the Fallowfield Loop. Charles did all the preparation for the event - setting up a website with all the details on it and a registration link. He made arrangements with the council for the rubbish collected to be picked up, did the risk assessments, provided the equipment and arranged with Gorton Community Centre for the centre to be available for refreshments and toilet/washing facilities. There were some key people that helped Charles including Erica, Ian, volunteers and staff at Sustrans, and volunteers and staff at Gorton Community Centre.

Here is Charles' report:

Dear Volunteer,

Despite Storm Brian threatening to wash out the weekend, a lot of people turned out to help and the result was that by 4pm Monday we had achieved our goal. That's just within the allotted time period so I can genuinely say that you all contributed to making it a success. Some stats of the event are:

- ✓ Nature of path=a key link between two long distance off-road routes through one of the most deprived areas of England
- ✓ Length of path=1.4 miles
- ✓ Number of people attending on Sat=27 part or whole days
- ✓ Number of people attending on Sun=9 part or whole days
- ✓ Number of people attending on Mon=22 part or whole days
- ✓ Duration of event (excluding lunch breaks)=3 x 5.0 hrs
- ✓ Total rubbish collected=335 x 70 litre bags plus moderate amount of larger items up to and including a bed
- ✓ Number of pick-up points=11
- ✓ Average distance each bag was carried to pick-up point=50m
- ✓ Number of bridges swept and cleaned underneath=3

A massive thank you to everyone who helped to make this such a successful event.

Sustrans Wildlife Champions Programme.

Sustrans Wildlife Champions has been continuing with a planned programme of monthly walks along the Fallowfield Loop focusing on a different topic each month. In September there were two events: an evening walk at the Gorton end of the Loop lead by bat expert Simon Holden, which was well attended and identified 3 species and a Sunday morning walk at the same location which was notable for the amount of plants still in flower alongside autumn fruits and seeds.

The next event is on Sunday 26th November 10.30am-12.30pm and will be concerned with trees along the Loop. For more information, email volunteers-north@sustrans.org.uk call Abigail Pound 0161 9236053 at the Sustrans office To learn more about the Sustrans Wildlife Champions Project go to <http://www.sustrans.org.uk/volunteer/our-volunteers/wildlife-volunteers> A programme for 2018 is being drawn up.

Update on Sustrans maintenance work for flood management from Mary Seaton - Sustrans Land Manager for Cheshire, Lancashire, Liverpool, Manchester & Yorkshire.

Most people will have seen the work carried out on Fallowfield Brook near Wellington Road. Sustrans were asked to carry out the work by Manchester City Council who are the local flood authority; we had to clear the bank of debris and silt build up and remove vegetation from the banks. We've done all we need to do for now but plan to bring a bigger digger on site early next year when the ground has had a chance to dry out a bit; we will then remove the remaining silt. We need to be able to keep both sides of the brook clear from larger vegetation at this point so we can get machinery in, however it does provide the opportunity to plant this area with wildflowers – especially as there is now much more light getting on to the site.

We have also been working on the brook near Highfield Country Park, though work here is not so noticeable. This area has suffered problem flooding for a few years. The original drainage siphon that goes under the old rail formation (on ours and neighbouring land) is not functioning as it should – not surprising considering its age. We cleared out the chamber on our land last winter and have taken topographical measurements so we can run an open watercourse over the land which will be easier to maintain. Currently we are waiting for work to be completed on neighbouring land so we can commission the building of the open pipe that will carry the watercourse. One thing that we did find when diverting the brook flow at Highfield was that there are fish in the brook at this point – all were rescued and put back when work was finished.

Future Work

We've now enter tree season so over the next few months that is where most of our focus will be. There is more planned to our other north west sites than the Fallowfield Loop but one thing we will be focussing on this season is thinning the small copses at Abbey Hey with the volunteers.

In terms of looking ahead to next year we're putting forward a few proposals in the budget setting process to tackle existing path maintenance issues. These include raising the path at Athol Road to tackle the recurring flooding problem; improving access for our vehicles at Abbey Hey; some resurfacing at the Chorlton end where there is tree route damage and looking at the camber of the path in a few areas. I can't promise we'll get money for all of these but I'll keep you updated how this progresses.

Mary Seaton, for Sustrans.

Stop Press

Next Monday (20th November) is our regular meeting at Union Chapel, Wellington Road Fallowfield at 7.30pm. All Fotfl members are welcome, do just turn up. Amongst the items of business we will be talking about will be:

- next steps in the development of the Levenshulme Quadrants,
- possibilities in relation to the old Levenshulme Station
- a proposal for promoting the Fallowfield Loop to local schools

If you have ideas, suggestions or comments you would like us to hear about but can't get to the meeting let us know through the contact page of the Fallowfield Loop website.

<https://fallowfieldloop.org/>

If you are interested in taking part in any of our volunteering activities and want to know more contact us through the links given at the end of the articles above or through the website.