



Next meeting
7.30-9.00pm
Monday 15th
January 2018.

at
Union Chapel
Wellington Road
Fallowfield
M14 6EQ

Hello and welcome to the first newsletter of 2018. The work members of The Friends Group over 2017 has contributed greatly to The Fallowfield Loop being increasingly recognised as an accessible multi-purpose urban greenway. We are hoping to continue this trend with the work we do over the coming year. Do read on as we report on recent events and some of the activities we are looking forward to being involved in over the next 12 months.

- **“THE FRIENDS” AT THE SUSTRANS VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION EVENT**
- **WORK DAYS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN ABBEY HEY**
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- **“THE FRIENDS” AT THE SUSTRANS VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION EVENT**

“A Stockport-based volunteer for Sustrans has won the charity’s North of England award for outstanding commitment to volunteering.”

Members of the Friends of the Fallowfield Loop enjoyed the hospitality of Sustrans at their Volunteer Celebration Event, held in Manchester City Centre on 19th December. There were guests from all over the North of England. During the evening the work Sustrans is leading up on over the region was showcased, with awards presented to volunteer groups and individuals. Ian Barker, who regular readers of this newsletter will know for his Workdays on the Loop, was recognised for his outstanding commitment to volunteering, and we were proud to celebrate this accolade with him. On accepting his award Ian said:

“The enjoyment comes from working and chatting with similar-minded volunteers from all walks of life and choosing tasks that you feel capable of or in trying new ones, while getting exercise. It’s great to see the improvements we’ve made to these green corridors benefit both people and wildlife and there are often appreciative comments from locals and passers-by.”

For more about the event and the work done by Sustrans in the North and throughout Britain go to <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/news/>

➤ WORK DAYS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN ABBEY HEY

Ian Barker plans the fortnightly work days together with the Sustrans Maintenance team. This means that the two strands of work can be well coordinated and there is no duplication of tasks. It also means that the volunteer work team can be assisted by the maintenance workers and their equipment when this would make a project possible, and in turn the volunteers can contribute extra labour to some of the formal maintenance tasks.

An example of this is the developments that are taking along the Abbey Hey stretch of the route. You may recollect that earlier in 2017 the Thursday group planted a Spiral Maze with tree whips provided by Sustrans. The group have also on been working periodically on a small copse on the opposite/north side of the route.

Thursday 7th December saw the Thursday volunteer group, a Sustrans maintenance team and the Sustrans ecologist (David Watson,) with two interns from an Italian university, working alongside each other in coppice maintenance work, small tree felling, making drainage channels and laying out the foundations for a dog exercise part. Dave gave the volunteers guidance on coppice management and instructed the group in the basics tree bud recognition. Everyone was invited to a get together straight after the work session. This took place at the "Great Central" Fallowfield.

To get latest information about the task days and to register to join in contact volunteers-nw@sustrans.org.uk or telephone 0161 923 6050.

Once you are registered you will receive the fortnightly notifications about the up and coming task day, then all you need to do is to let Ian know if you are intending to come along.

➤ FALLOFIELD LOOP ORCHARDS

The members' meeting in November decided that we should take a break from holding our regular Wassail at the Levenshulme orchard this year. However, we have high hopes for a bumper crop in the coming season at all of the three community orchards which we manage. The spring blossom will give us our first indication. The trees have grown well in size, and we have already completed our winter pruning. Tasks for the spring will include the removal of the wire guards at the Levy orchard, so that the encroaching grass can be more easily kept at bay. We had a shock in September when Sustrans informed us that up to half of the trees in the Wellington Road orchard might have to be removed to enable clearing of vegetation from the neighbouring brook to take place. Fortunately, when it came to it, only one was lost. And we have plans to plant more fruit trees at the Debdale site, where there is plenty of unused space in a sunny position. This will depend on the success of our applications for the necessary funding.

➤ WILDLIFE CHAMPIONS UPDATE

The calendar is now out for the Wildlife Champions Fallowfield Loop Surveys (see below for the schedule for the first 4 months of 2018). This is an ongoing project that combines annual surveys of wildlife on the Fallowfield Loop and offers people opportunities to learn more about local wildlife and to contribute to this important monitoring work. For more information see the details below.

You don't need to register to take part ----- You can just turn up on the day.

Schedule of Wildlife Surveys 2018 – Fallowfield Loop

Fourth Sunday of the month 10.30am-12.30pm (plus some additional surveys)

For more information, email volunteers-north@sustrans.org.uk

Title	Name	Contact Details
Volunteer Coordinator (staff)	Abigail Pound	0161 9236053
Group Leader (volunteer)	Matt Holker	07769691536
Wildlife Champion (volunteer)	Ray Dumpleton	07564623530

January 28/01/2018	St Werburghs Metro Station Chorlton	Birds	Tony O'Mahoney Bring binoculars and bird ID guides if you have them.
February 25/02/2018	Lattice Bridge	Winter trees	Bring ID guides if you have them.
March 25/03/2018	Atholl Road Access Point Map	Signs of Spring	More information at http://www.naturesca lendar.org.uk/
April 22/04/2018	Meet on the bridge at the entrance to Debdale Allotments (Entrance to the Loop from Alston Road)	Spring flowers	Dave Bishop Ray to bring grassland plant and woodland plant ID guides provided by Sustrans.

➤ PLANNING FOR THE SEPTEMBER COMMUNITY EVENT ON THE LOOP

Sustrans are planning to hold a day long public event on the Fallowfield Loop next September. They have secured funding for this from Pukka teas. The aim is to engage local people, and so increase the numbers of first-time users of the Loop by inviting them to join in a community design event which will generate ideas.

These ideas will be used in two ways; to create a stronger place (or brand) identity for the route, and to design more inviting entrances. The design ideas can then be used in bids for funding so that proposals can be implemented. The input of current and potential Loop users, and experts such as the Friends, is vital in planning a fun event which attracts local people and communities and works well in generating design ideas.

If you would like to be involved in the planning contact [Jo Phillips](mailto:joanne.phillips@mmu.ac.uk), who is coordinating the event, with your suggestions or questions. Jo will stay in touch during the planning period, and will let you know about the first planning meeting, which will be held during February to discuss possibilities for the event. Whether you would just like to come to the first meeting, or get more fully involved, you will be very welcome.

You can email her at joanne.phillips@mmu.ac.uk.

➤ **CAN YOU HELP? ----- THE LOOP AS A RESOURCE FOR LOCAL SCHOOLS**

Over the years the Friends have worked intermittently with school groups, particularly those whose premises are adjacent to the Fallowfield Loop. As the diverse aspects of the Fallowfield Loop continue to be developed it has the potential to be a useful educational resource as well as an off-road route to school and a place where cycling skills can be developed. At the November meeting it was agreed that one of the goals for 2018 would be to further develop this work. A couple of members are working on a resource concerned with “points of interest along the Fallowfield Loop”. This includes highlighting environmental and ecological features, the social, industrial and transport history associated with the localities along the route and showing links to other places and communities of interest that can be easily accessed from the Loop.

We want to start approaching schools over the spring of 2018 and are looking for some guidance and suggestions about how best to initiate this work.

If you feel you can help in any way, such as already having a link with a school yourself, or suggesting schools that may be interested, or even getting involved with this activity itself please get in touch with the secretary, Frances.mccann@hotmail.co.uk

➤ **STOP PRESS**

[The next members' meeting will be at Union Chapel, Wellington Road, Fallowfield on Monday 15th January at 7.30pm.](#)

Amongst other items of business we will be talking about will be: the outcomes of funding applications we have submitted, the late summer event, follow-up news from presentations at the November meeting and planning for the coming year.

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.