

The Cycleway to Wigan Pier

Rob Raikes and Lorenza Casini visit Wigan to see how the wheels turn



The heart of Wigan Pier (The pub to the right is an original 1800s warehouse, built in the heart of Wigan Pier)

On a rare sunny day, we took our bikes on the train from Manchester Victoria to Wigan Wallgate Station to meet Peter Wickett, Senior Transport Strategist, (Cycling, Public Transport, Freight) for Wigan Council.

Over a brew in Market Street, a pedestrianised area where cyclists are welcome, Peter explained he has been tasked with “challenging everything” in the Borough’s new transport strategy (www.wigan.gov.uk/onthemove). A keen cyclist himself, and the first one to be Wigan Council Cycling Officer for some years, Peter gets his colleagues out on bikes to test their cycling infrastructure designs.

During a recent trip to Nice, Peter was impressed by segregated, smooth cycle tracks in the city, very well used and patrolled by cycling Gendarmes. He intends to develop safe, continuous cycle routes from outlying areas into Wigan centre as well as leisure/commuter routes to Leigh, Standish and the countryside.

He described existing radial routes into Leigh on quiet roads, cut-throughs and greenways with Toucan crossings on the big roads. He is working with local politicians and the police to try and reverse the ban on cycling in Leigh pedestrianised centre.

Peter is determined to improve the accessibility and visibility of cycling. Problematic barriers on canal towpaths and National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 55 were sorted out after he encouraged his boss to accompany him on a staff cycle outing to experience them herself.

The Council persuaded a local supermarket to move their cycle parking from the corner of the car park to the store entrance, only for the staff to use the area for trolley storage. The situation now resolved with the appointment of a new store manager.....a cyclist!

Bikeability-type training is available in schools overseen by Peter’s colleagues in the Local Transport Plan and Road Safety Group. The emphasis of monitoring is shifting from number-crunching to long term effects and results.

We said our goodbyes to Peter and moved onto Health on Wheels (HoW) a project run by Active Living in Wigan. (See www.activeliving.org.uk/programmes/health_on_wheels.php). After some pot luck navigation and helpful directions from locals, we found the Leeds to Liverpool Canal, which took us through fascinating industrial landscapes to Wigan Investment Centre, where we met Darren Rogers, Active Living’s Community Activity Officer, in a bright and airy reception lounge overlooking the canal. >>



One of the access points to the Leeds to Liverpool Canal, unfortunately not so cycle-friendly.



Pleasant and direct cycle routes through Wigan along the Leeds to Liverpool Canal towpath

Health On Wheels runs up to 20 rides a week for groups of differing abilities. The rides are often oversubscribed with a steady flow of people progressing from short led leisure

rides to longer ones. For some a bike becomes part of their daily life. The rides are led by volunteers, who do health checks on the riders (via questionnaires) and M-checks (swift safety checks) on their bikes. On the rides they provide encouragement and basic mechanical back-up. There is always a back-marker to ensure nobody gets left behind.

The project hold six pods at recreational sites round Wigan with 10-12 bikes in each plus child seats, helmets and ancillary kit.

Darren has just introduced half hour rides to encourage the faint hearted. He said the best thing about the project was the social aspect as riders catch up with each other over a cup of tea and a biscuit at the end.

On behalf of GMCC, Rob and Lorenza wish Peter and Darren all the best in their initiatives. It was great to see such enthusiasm and commitment to encouraging Cycling For All.

WIGAN BOROUGH ON THE MOVE!
Consultation open until 10 Oct

'Wigan Borough on the Move' outlines the key issues and opportunities being considered as part of an emerging transport strategy for the Wigan Borough.

Have you say at www.wigan.gov.uk/onthe-move. You can view the full consultation document or a condensed summary, and complete the questionnaire. Email comments to: transportstrategy@wigan.gov.uk

The Return of the Roadster

By Chris Page

The roadster dates back almost as far as the safety bicycle itself.

To many, the archetypal roadster is the Raleigh Tourist or DL-1, which will be celebrating its 100th birthday in 2013. Others will see a roadster and think of it as a Dutch-style bike, despite their design being much the same as (and originally based on) that of the English Roadster.

In the UK, these bicycles were particularly popular when cycling was treated primarily as an everyday mode of transport for the average person. With the rise of the private car, successive governments initiated and supported policies which advanced the cause of private motoring. This came at the expense of cycling, particularly cycling for transportation by the average person. Cycling, and particularly the roadster, went into massive decline both here and in much of the developed world.

They still continued to be popular in less developed parts of the world at the time, such as in much of Asia and Africa, as well as in countries such as The Netherlands and Denmark, where governments invested in cycle infrastructure to undo much of the damage done to cycling by motor-centric policy.

As cycling for transport fell out of favour with the average Briton, the bicycle industry responded with a big push towards cycling for sport and recreation. The 1970s saw a huge increase in the popularity of racing bikes, both here and in the USA, with mountain biking following on in the next decade and beyond.



Vintage 1939 Raleigh Roadster. Photo on www.bicycleodyssey.com

With this change, cycling ceased to be a normal everyday method of conveyance, and became the preserve of a smaller core of enthusiasts. Sales of bicycles were still high, but the amount of miles cycled per year by the average Briton plummeted. The roadster had all but vanished from the landscape.

Over the next few decades, cycling's modal share (the number of trips made by bicycle) effectively flat-lined. Sadly, whilst cycling rates still haven't made any significant recovery across most of the UK, there is a glimmer of hope; the roadster is making a bit of a comeback. A new generation of cyclist is discovering the benefits the roadster has to offer. British manufacturer Pashley and rivals from elsewhere in Europe including Batavus, Gazelle, BSP and Velorbis are leading the way, with several modernised versions of the

classic roadster becoming more readily available. It looks like the UK bike trade is finally starting to wake up to the non-enthusiast market again; people who want a comfortable and reliable bike to take them from A-to-B.

Chris Page is a local cycle campaigner whose focus is primarily on cycling-for-transportation.



No to Longer Lorries!

CTC – The UK’s National Cyclists’ Organisation is urging all cyclists to help stop the introduction of dangerously long lorries on our streets. Despite the fact that lorries are involved in a disproportionate number of crashes with both cyclists and pedestrians, road safety minister Mike Penning MP is planning to allow lorries that are over two metres longer!

CTC is asking all cyclists to take action to prevent this by asking their MP to write to Mike Penning. Cyclists can email their MPs directly from www.ctc.org.uk/nolongerlorries.

While left turns account for just 3% of overall road fatalities involving a lorry, the figure for cyclists’ deaths was 38%. Freight on Rail and the Campaign for Better Transport have commissioned research which further suggests that safety would deteriorate with longer lorry trailers.

CTC Campaigns Director, Roger Geffen, said: “Lorries present a serious risk to cyclists – one in five of the deaths of cyclists involve lorries. Allowing even longer lorries onto our roads will mean larger ‘blind spots’, more tail swing and a greater risk of hitting other road users. .”

Campaigners are also concerned that the increase in lorry length will artificially sustain the market for road haulage and thereby delay any shift to the greener option of rail freight.

The joint statement from Campaign for Better Transport and Freight on Rail – backed by Campaign to Protect Rural England, CTC, Friends of the Earth, Living Streets, RoadPeace and Sustrans is on www.freightonrail.org.uk

The report by Freight on Rail entitled ‘Review of Government proposals for Longer Semi-Trailers (LSTs)’ is available to download here: www.freightonrail.org.uk/PDF/LST%20Report%20v7.pdf

CTC’s policy on Goods Vehicles can be found here: www.ctc.org.uk/resources/Campaigns/1105_CTC_GoodsVehicles%281%29_brf.pdf

Please get behind this campaign. Write to your MP using the online tool at www.ctc.org.uk/nolongerlorries. Tell your friends about it and if you use Twitter, tweet the campaign using [#nolongerlorries](https://twitter.com/nolongerlorries)

100 women do Manchester 100

By Cathy Gelbin



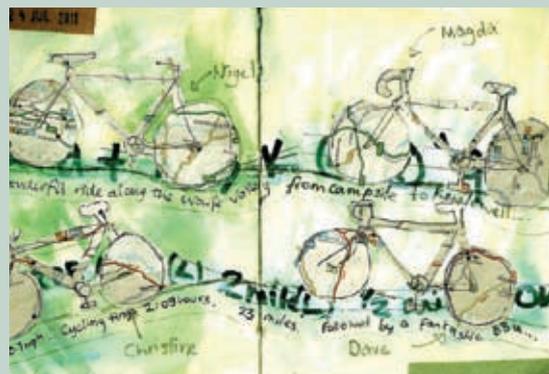
Photo by Paul Markman

On 4 September at 5.30 am, I was feeling slightly nervous. For the last three months, I’d been training with Team Glow, former world champion track cyclist Glynis Francis’s initiative to get 100 women to participate in the Manchester 100 bike ride. Would the training I’d done suffice to get me, a light commuter rider, through a very long day? As I slipped on my shiny new team top, I began to feel that it would.

After 60 fairly relaxed miles through lovely Cheshire countryside, I was raring to go, thanks also to my riding partner Ruthie, who kept me going with banana shortbread and her good company. We kept seeing the purple t-shirts of our 100 team-mates dotting the Cheshire lanes. Word had spread and on the finish line a large crowd waited to cheer Glynis for having brought so many women into this event!

Even though Ruthie and I struggled a bit on the hills on our way into Manchester, we kept our speed and did the entire route in a respectable 7.5 hours. This is just the beginning. Team Glow is open to new women, so join us for the exciting future events we’re already planning! Find out more at www.teamglow.net

Thank you to everyone who gave personal support and donations to The Christie cancer charity in Manchester. Many of us in Team Glow have friends being treated for cancer at The Christie and elsewhere, and your support has meant more to all of us than I can say.



Up and Down the dales



Cheshire crops turning gold



This Way!

Artist Christine Evans trained for and completed the Manchester 100 and sketched en route during training rides. More at www.battandgorgeous.com

MOVING MANCHESTER FOR MOVING PLANET

On 24 SEPTEMBER 2011 Join MERCi for REVOLUTION

Take part in a day of fun and positive action as part of Moving Planet: A day to move past fossil fuels (www.moving-planet.org).

COMPETITION: Start a transport revolution! Prizes for the most interesting and unusual ways of getting to Bridge 5 Mill without using fossil fuels (including using the canal). Prizes for the bikes with the most BLING!

Read more at www.merci.org.uk

IDIOT OF THE MONTH

Manchester Evening News, Friday 9th Sept 2011. Page 8. Opinion. Andrew Grimes (Opinions you can't ignore)

LET'S GET 'EM OFF THEIR BIKES

I am heartened by a survey that claims fewer people are cycling to work. The more fashion-conscious among them - mainly but not exclusively women - don't like the idea of developing helmet hair styles or of turning up at their desks in a sweaty and smelly condition.

This is good news for all road users, pedestrians not excluded. Anything that smashes the greenie cult of the pestilential peak-hour bike is good for the environment.

GREATER MANCHESTER CYCLING CAMPAIGN

meets on the second Monday of each month, 7.00pm at the Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester, close to Manchester Town Hall. The meeting is usually followed by a drink in a nearby pub. Come along and see what it's about or join our social rides, details on www.gmcc.org.uk

JOIN BIKE FRIDAY

Bike Friday starts at locations across Greater Manchester and cyclists converge in the city centre by 8.30am. Whether you're new to cycling, returning to your bike after a break, or cycle every day, join us on our monthly rides.

www.bikefriday.org

7.40am starting points:

- Worsley Rd/Chatsworth Rd junction, opposite Greenleach Lane/Monton Green (7.50AM)/ Hope Hospital (8AM)

8am starting points:

- Stretford Mall (next to Chester Road bus stop)
- Chorlton Library
- Withington Library
- Levenshulme Station
- Prestwich Pizza (Bury New Road /Scholes Lane junction)

SHOPS OFFERING DISCOUNTS TO GMCC MEMBERS

A1 Cycle Spares 0161 998 2882
414-416 Palatine Road, Northenden, M22 4JT

A6 Cycle Warehouse, 0161 248 5400
752-762 Stockport Road, Longsight

Altrincham Bike Shak 0161 929 9355
10 Oakfield Trading Estate, Oakfield Rd

Bennets, 0161 969 1818
172-4 Northenden Road, Sale Moor

Bicycle Doctor 0161 224 1303
68-70 Dickenson Road, Rusholme
www.bicycledoctor.co.uk

Biking Factory Shop, 0161 773 2125
424-426, Bury New Rd Prestwich M25 1BD

Devereux Cycles, 0161 973 5234
45 Green Lane M33 5PN

Eddie McGrath Cycles, 0161 748 2733
31 Station Road, Urmston, Trafford, M41 9JG

Evans Cycles Manchester, 0161 834 6732
201 Deansgate M3 3NW

Harry Hall Cycles, 0161 236 5699
67, The Arches, Whitworth St West M1 5WQ

Keep Pedalling 0161 222 6015
23 Hilton Street M1 1EL

Ken Foster's Cycle Logic, 0161 881 7160
374-6 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton, M21 8AZ
www.kenfosterscyclelogic.co.uk

Manchester Cycle Exchange, 0161 748 2532
1 Brook Terrace Barton Road Davyhulme, M41 7NG

NW Mountain Bike Centre, 0161 428 3311
249 Stockport Road, Cheadle

Revolve mobile cycle repairs (07939 062 600)
South and Central Manchester

Skidmores Cycles 0161 624 5912
37 Union Street, Oldham

Withington Cycles 0161 445 3492
26 Burton Road, Withington

LOCAL AUTHORITY CONTACTS

GMAuthority	Contact	Phone	Email
BOLTON	Aubrey McCreesh	01204 336480	aubrey.mcreesh@bolton.gov.uk
BURY	Nicola Lee	0161 253 5825	n.lee@bury.gov.uk
MANCHESTER	James McInerney	0161 234 3369	j.mcinerney@manchester.gov.uk
OLDHAM	Paul Bruffell	0161 770 4360	paul.bruffell@unitypartnership.com
ROCHDALE	Dave Stewart	01706 924608	dave.stewart@theimpactpartnership.com
SALFORD	Lee Evans	0161 793 3801	lee.evans@salford.gov.uk
STOCKPORT	Don Naylor	0161 474 4593	don.naylor@stockport.gov.uk
TAMESIDE	Michael Hughes	0161 342 3704	michael.hughes@tameside.gov.uk
TRAFFORD	Dominic Smith	0161 912 4312	cycling@trafford.gov.uk
WIGAN	Peter Wickett	01942 404317	p.wickett@wigan.gov.uk