

Ride

Included with membership, £1.00 where sold.

Getting
should be
as easy as
riding a bike

www.gmcc.org.uk

Winter 2014

Thanks

Thank you to all have contributed towards this issue.
Without your time and effort it would not be possible.

Views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those
of the Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign.

Any corrections or clarifications should be sent using the
contact details on the rear page. Responsibility for any content
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The quarterly publication of Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign

Jonathan Keenan
Secretary, GMCC

For me campaigning is not something I do because I love cycling, although I do, but because I can see what drastic changes could be made to the quality of all our lives by creating a sizeable modal shift away from cars, especially on short journeys. I write elsewhere in this issue about imagining a better environment to live in. If you think about it people put a lot of effort to go somewhere traffic free where it's safe to wander. Just look at the queues at the weekend for the Trafford Centre.

In the mean time there is an increasing workload for GMCC centred around the developing (and occasionally very disappointing) Velocity plans alongside taking part in the evolution of Space for Cycling as a campaign and getting our own Strategic Cycle Map started. It feels like Greater Manchester is coming to a pivotal point where we could either see a small number of real infrastructural improvements leading to increased modal share for cycling (although only in limited areas) or disappointing compromises that leave us barely better off than before. Interesting times.

LOVE YOUR BIKE - CYCLING MANIFESTO



At the end of October Love Your Bike relaunched their Greater Manchester cycling manifesto: Getting Moving. After several months of consultation with signatories, including GMCC and other organisations interested in getting more people cycling for more of their journeys, the manifesto has been refreshed to better reflect recent developments in the area and to concisely spell out what action is now needed. The manifesto is structured around five key asks that will help the conurbation achieve the target of 20% of all journeys under 5 miles being by bike by 2020. These relate to political leadership, high standards of design, sustained promotion, integration with other modes of transport, and enforcement of good driving and cycling standards. Underpinning these policies are six design principles: safe, coherent, direct, comfortable and future-proof.

With a range of signatories across public, private, academic and community sectors the manifesto demonstrates the broad support for policies that help us all benefit from a cycling city.

To read the manifesto in full and sign up your organisation visit our website.

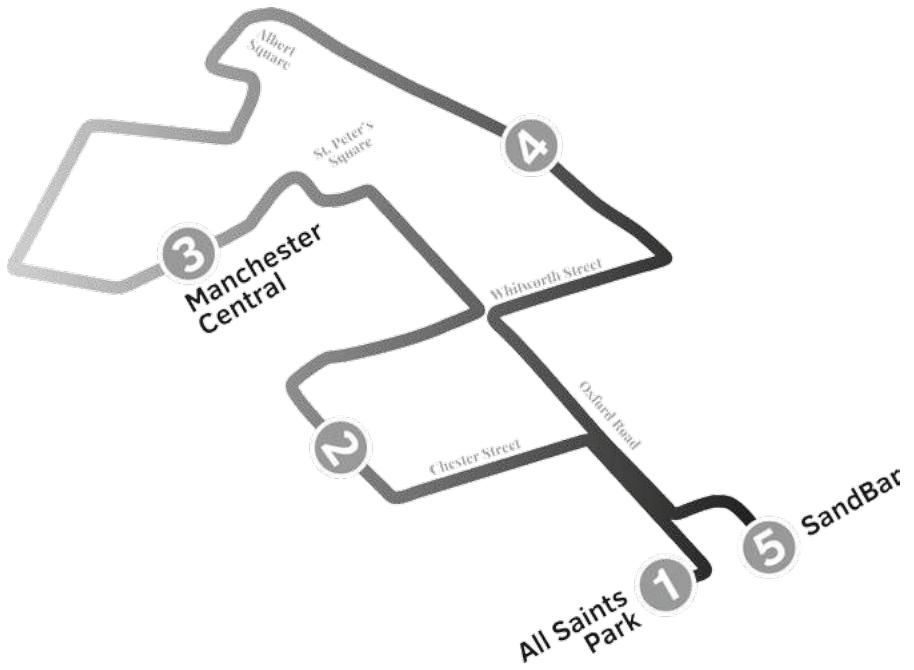
www.loveyourbike.org/manifesto

Labour Conference Ride

On Monday the 22nd of September 2014 a few hundred cyclists took the #space4cycling message to the Labour Conference at *Manchester Central*. Organised in tandem with CTC who also had a similar the following week in Birmingham for the Conservative conference.



Illustration: CTC – the national cycling charity + Liz Snook



- 1 In the early evening people slowly began to gather at All Saints Park on Oxford Road in high spirits (the sun was still shining and it had been a dry day). Shortly after 6.00pm and a quick photocall the riders set off from the park and onto Oxford Road.
- 2 The ride continued through the evening sunshine tapering out on the narrow Chester Street and Cambridge Street before regrouping on Whitworth Street for the northern leg of Oxford Street.
- 3 Arriving earlier than expected outside the Bridgewater Hall and Manchester Central Roger Geffen from CTC gave a short speech outlining how the Space for Cycling campaign came about originally, and laterally how this year's conference rides were organised. Following this there were a number of speeches from delegates (councillors, MPs and prospective parliamentary candidates) who had come across from the hall. While expressing support for cycling and the Space for Cycling campaign a common theme began to develop; they enjoyed cycling as a child, gave it up as they reached adulthood then returned in middle age as a way to get healthier and as a quick and convenient way to get around the places they lived.
- 4 Speeches over dusk had fallen over Manchester and the second half of the ride was underway from Manchester Central via Great Northern Square to ride past the town hall then down Princess Street and eventually Oxford Road again. Going downhill there was a moderate pace accompanied by three different sound systems at different sections of the group.
- 5 The ride came to an end at SandBar, just off Oxford Road, where some light refreshments were taken by many.

Thanks is due to all who helped organise and marshall the ride, and an even bigger thank you to all who turned out and joined the ride and help show Labour Conference that Greater Manchester needs Space for Cycling.





Manchester Remembrance Ride

The inaugural Manchester Remembrance Ride for Traffic Victims was held on Saturday 15 November 2014 to coincide with the UN-sponsored World Day of Remembrance for Traffic Victims, which falls on the third Sunday of November every year, as well as other events around the UK aimed at raising awareness of road safety, most notably London's National Funeral for the Unknown Victim of Traffic Violence and Birmingham's Ride For Hope.

The format we chose for the Manchester event was a bike ride from Platt Fields Bike Hub visiting two ghost bikes, with the opportunity for others to join us at those points at set times, and ending at the cenotaph on St. Peter's Square.

The ride was arranged at fairly short notice and publicised largely via social media, and it was heartening to see that some 20 people took time out of their weekend to come and pay their respects.

We rode the short distance to Josh Jarvis's ghost bike at Landcross Road, where we were met by a local resident who had been involved in having the ghost bike erected. She described the shock felt by the local community at Josh's death, her dismay at the still-dangerous conditions on the stretch of road where Josh died and explained how the ghost bike had come about: one resident donated a bike, another sprayed it white and the community tends it in Josh's memory. Josh was a 21-year-old student at Manchester University reading film studies and looking to make his career in the media. He died on 11 February 2014 following a collision with a cement mixer and, as far as we could ascertain, there have been no legal proceedings in the matter to date. We attached some flowers to the bike and observed a minute's silence.

From there we rode the two miles or so to the site of Jaye Bloomfield's ghost bike near Hulme Street, attached to the railings of the central island of a crossing over a slip-road to the A57(M). Sadly the bike was damaged by another speeding driver in September of this year, so we were initially unsure of whether there would be a bike to visit. However, the bike has been re-attached, its bent wheel and twisted frame rendering its symbolism all the more poignant.

Within a couple of moments of arriving at Jaye's bike, two contrasting incidents underlined the importance of engaging in such an act of remembrance. First a driver noticed us gathering with our bikes, slowed and said that he drives past the bike almost every day and each time he sees it it touches his soul that a person died there. His words had barely faded when the driver of a souped-up hatchback, noticing nothing in particular, drove through the traffic at considerable speed, engaging in exactly the behaviour that cost Jaye her life at that very spot. The sense of shock within our group was palpable and a number of unpublishable utterances were hurled in the direction of the reckless driver.

We then gathered to pay our respects to Jaye. She was 44 years old and in the process of setting up her own web-design business. She was about to celebrate the first anniversary of her civil partnership with Gemma, whom a number of the group had come to know since the tragedy. She was killed by a speeding driver as she wheeled her bike across the crossing on 3 August 2013. The driver was arrested for causing death by dangerous driving but charges were later dropped as the signage was allegedly unclear. The Critical Mass following Jaye's death was dedicated to her memory, and Kieran Evans, who is instrumental in running the Manchester Critical Mass, said a few words about that event: that everyone was urged to wear red (Jaye's favourite colour); that "funeral masses" (Critical Masses in memory of one of our clan who has fallen) are very difficult, emotional events; that he didn't know Jaye, but that she must have been an amazing person, having since met some of her friends and listened to their memories of her. We attached some red flowers to her bike and observed a minute's silence in her memory.

We then rode the short distance to St. Peter's Square (narrowly avoiding a dooring on Mount Street) and I said a few words about the purpose of the event:

"The aim of the ride was to pay our respects to the victims and reflect on the causes of traffic violence. Although it was a bike ride, we were there to remember all traffic victims: drivers, passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and many more.

Around the world there are some 1.2 million road deaths each year. Some 30,000 people die on the USA's roads annually – the equivalent of three jumbo jets crashing each week. In any other area of life such loss and suffering would be unthinkable, but roads are treated differently. In the UK road deaths have halved since 2000: in 2013 1,700 people died on our roads. But that's still too many. There are also many indirect fatalities from pollution and the effects of inactivity, in which car-dependence plays a part. To quote Chris Boardman: "The way we travel now is killing us".

Yet there are things we can do to improve matters: improved HGV design and driver training; creation of places to cycle and walk safely; reduction of speed limits; enforcement against drink and distracted driving; "Vision Zero" initiatives such as that in Sweden, aiming to eradicate road deaths; ensuring that drivers are properly punished under the umbrella of "road justice", to name just a few. So, although the ride was not affiliated to any particular cause, all were urged to continue applying pressure in their preferred manner and keep working to make our roads safer. We then held a moment's silence to remember all victims of traffic violence.

Nick Hubble

GREATER MANCHESTER:



A CYCLING CITY?

Greater Manchester is an ambitious city. There is no better example of this than the speed and fervour that councils pursued 'DevoManc' following Scotland's referendum earlier this year. Securing a city deal with the Chancellor of the Exchequer within 36 days of the Scottish plebiscite.

This ambition also extends to cycling within Greater Manchester. *Transport for Greater Manchester's (TfGM)* target is for a 300% increase in the proportion of trips made by bicycle over the next eleven years, in other words 10% modal share by 2025. With Winter upon us we look at Greater Manchester's cycling ambitions.

The Vision Thing

Jonathan Keenan

People enjoy cycling for all sorts of reasons - freedom, the pleasure that comes from moving under your own steam, improved fitness, predictable travel times... the list is longer but this isn't about that. This is about painting a picture for those that do not cycle or may even think it's a regressive idea. It's not about 'how'* to get more people cycling, it's about 'why'.

It's worth considering what it is we want for our towns and cities in the future. They are under pressure as the internet changes how we use them, and how and where we work. To flourish they will need to attract people for reasons other than relying on big brand high street shopping. Culture and leisure is becoming increasingly important.

So what I'd like is this:

- I'd like to be able to walk or cycle into my town centre relaxed and relatively unconcerned by motor traffic.
- I'd like to wave my kids off to school in the same way.
- I'd like my street to be a place people are comfortable to hang out on rather than scurry away indoors.
- I'd like my own and my neighbours kids to grow up with a free spirit, born out of access to safe independent travel.
- I'd like us all to remain alert and active well into old age and do so relatively free of the diseases caused by pollution and low activity.
- I'd like my town centre to be diverse and interesting and a great place to meet and to interact with the wider community, to connect and create networks.
- When I do drive I'd like the roads to be less congested, because people find it easier to travel by other means.
- I'd like to breathe cleaner air.
- I'd like to shop locally and regularly, for more fresh produce in smaller quantity and as it's needed.
- Finally I'd like my neighbourhood to just look better; pleasant pavements, less of a linear car park and less cluttered with ugly street furniture. Perhaps places to sit, meet and gather. A bit more greenery.

This isn't some strange Mediterranean climate thing, it's a global urge in humans that we have let slowly slip away on a promise of freedom provided by unfettered car use. I think this wish list is achievable by creating a shift away from car use for short journeys to cycling.

. . . (continues >)

If the trip into town was easy by bike and the environment when you got there was pleasant enough to make you want to linger a little longer you would likely choose to go there more often. Research shows that people cycling to shops spend less, but visit more often, and their average spend is greater than those that drive. Shopping locally keeps more money in the local economy. It keeps smaller independent businesses alive which adds diversity and interest to our neighbourhoods and create a sense of place that national brands cannot. They adapt quickly to local needs and help build communities. Shopping locally and regularly also allows the activity to be built into your daily rhythm instead of finding the time for the 'big shop'. And whilst you do it you are improving your health.

Active travel isn't a magic bullet for all our ailments but it is a simple way to add regular exercise into our lives. For most people trying to find time to 'do some exercise' quickly becomes a problem, you only have to look at the fall off rates in gym membership after January to see that. By making short journeys on foot or by bike we add this into our days without thinking, usually saving time on doing the same thing by car. There are some barriers like weather and hills that no amount of campaigning can change, only regular cycling puts these into perspective, but the main barrier is subjective and objective safety.

So next time you are about to talk to your cycle-sceptic friend remember that your enthusiasm for cycle lanes translates as a negative impact on their lives and so first we need to win the argument about what we want our built environment to be like in the future and a sell a vision of a different way of living. Of course sometimes they just need to get on a bike and remind themselves just how pleasant and fun it can be*.

N.B. This is not the writing of an expert or academic, it's the rambling ideas of someone who has had a lifelong interest in regeneration and takes photographs for a living. What I do know is that when I get asked to photograph a town for marketing purposes I never get asked to shoot lines of parked cars and busy traffic lights. I'm asked to show people strolling down the main street and sat outside cafes.

*with Space for Cycling



What is the vision for cycling in Greater Manchester?

TfGM's latest Cycling Strategy was published in July of this year and aims "for a real cultural shift in cycling across the region through:

- A co-ordinated approach with partners
- Improved cycle parking at rail, *Metrolink* and transport interchanges
- A network of high quality dedicated cycle routes, segregated from traffic where possible and which connect to employment centres, schools, leisure opportunities and the regional centre
- Working with educational establishments to increase cycling levels in young people
- The widespread application of a Travel Choices programme
- Work with Public Health Authorities to develop cycle-focused health and wellbeing initiatives."

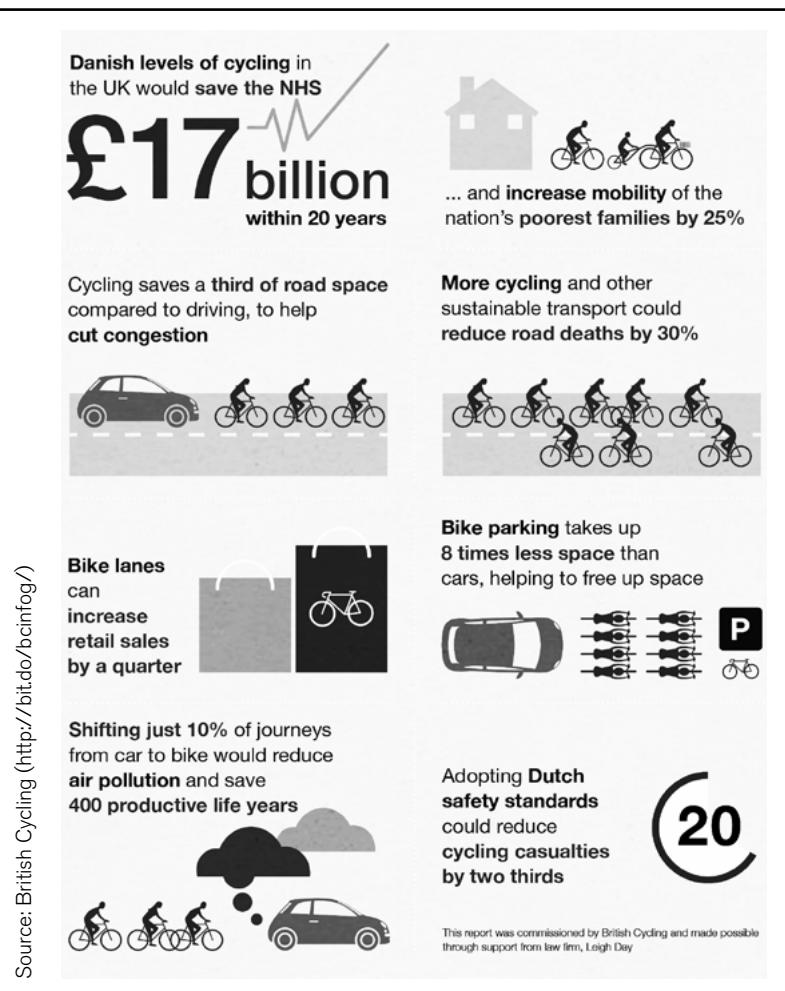
What's at stake?

In October 2014 British Cycling published a report compiled by Dr Rachel Aldred of Westminster University outlining the benefits of investment in cycling, not just for people who cycle, but the economy and wider society.

Not exactly surprising results (assuming you are already a passionate advocate of cycling). What was more striking was a statistical report from the *Department for Transport* which stated that on average for every £1.00 invested in cycling

infrastructure the overall return was around £5.00.

Time and time again from academic analyses, statistical reports and international case studies unfettered investment in cycling pays off for cities.



What's happening?

Two points from TfGM's vision stand out from the rest. They are highlighted by other cities around the world who are deliveing the "cultural shift" that Greater Manchester wants to achieve for cycling. Co-ordinated approach to cycling and a high quality, segregated network of cycle routes. So what's happening in Greater Manchester right now? The following examples aren't intended to be a comprehensive report but featuring developments indicative of recent times.



Grow

Some may have seen recent billboards from *Manchester City Council* stating that cycle lanes (amongst other things) in Manchester are "growing". The dedicated Grow website is somewhat lacking in detail on how Manchester's cycle lanes are growing. The summary offers:

"We're creating more cycleways. Over the next two years you'll see dedicated cycleways across the city, making cycling safer and easier."

It expands this in all of eighty-five words.

"We're re-shaping our region to make cycling part of our culture, connecting Greater Manchester's 2.7million residents to their schools, shops, work and leisure spots while cutting noise and pollution.

We already have some great cycling facilities – but not enough, and they're not well connected. 'Better by cycle' projects – underway across Greater Manchester – will help fix that: joining up routes, making them safer, and getting more people cycling.

By 2025 we hope 10 per cent of all journeys in Manchester will be made by bike."



St Peter's Square

Along with the reopening of Manchester's *Central Library* the first stage of St Peter's Square £20m renewal has been opened to the public. The results for cycling are not great.

Since the summer (while St Peter's Square work was still progressing) there have been well documented parking issues at *Central Library* with only a few of Sheffield stands outside the *Midland Hotel*. When St Peter's Square fully opened there was initially no extra stands, then finally a handful of new stands were installed which are (understandably) oversubscribed as can be seen in the picture.

As part of the developments the full area of the square has been pedestrianised, losing a two way cycle route in the heart of the city. Cycling (along with skate boarding, skating and "riding on wheels etc." is now prohibited by a byelaw which carries a £500 fine for breaching it.



Photograph: @EddyRhead

Manchester Road, Cheadle

Up to £450k has been spent by Stockport Council on "a cycle route" on Manchester Road in Cheadle. The result is a shared used pavement -complete with the trademark obstacles (see picture on right).

Unsurprisingly north and south bound cyclists are ignoring the path. and those that do use it are coming into conflict with pedestrians unaware of where they are meant to walk and often seem shocked to see a cyclist heading towards them.

The now narrower northbound carriageway accentuates pre-existing pinch points outside the cemetery and the wider pavement now provides parking opportunity for the Parris Wood playing field users.



Oxford Road plans

'Dutch style' cycle lanes(funded by the Velocity project) for Oxford Road have long been trumpeted, but shovels are yet to meet the ground -this is now expected in Spring 2015. However in November TfGM released updated plans for the routes following consultations with stakeholders, these can be viewed online at <http://bit.do/TfGMOx>.

Importantly the scheme now extends beyond Hathershage Road to Moss Lane East (after direct consultation with GMCC and others) and kerb seperated lanes are now suggested in the promotional video. This however is not confirmed, falls short of usual segregation standards, and is patchy through the plans. Examples of this are at the junctions of Oxford with Grafton Street and Dover Street, and a direct conflict with buses at the north of Oxford Street.

You no doubt can think of similar examples to those outlined above across Greater Manchester that lack a "co-ordinated approach" or fall short of being "high quality". Of course if you do know of any good developments then do let us know (email: nl@gmcc.org.uk).

Will Greater Manchester become a cycling city?

Who knows. For Greater Manchester to become a true 'Velocity' with high levels of cycling the rhetoric and words have to be met with actions. As the adage goes, actions speak louder than words.

GMCC Membership

Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign (GMCC) works to represent cycling interests with local authorities and other organisations. We are run entirely by volunteers, so we can campaign without fear or favour.

If you live, work, or travel in Greater Manchester and want to support what we do or if you want to add your voice to our campaigns then you can become a member. As a member you get the following rights and benefits:

- your interests represented within local authorities and other relevant organisations
- voting rights at meetings
- quarterly publication delivered to your door complimentary
- mailing list opportunities to keep up to date
- volunteering opportunities

In addition to this a number of bike shops and retailers in Greater Manchester offer discounts between 5% and 10% to GMCC members. To receive the discount you must hold a valid membership card.

A1 Cycle Spares (0161 998 2882) 414-416 Palatine Rd, Northenden

A6 Cycle Warehouse (0161 248 5400) 752-762 Stockport Rd, Longsight

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

Sale Moor Car & Cycle (0161 969 1818) 174 Northenden Rd, Sale M33 2SR

Bicycle Doctor (0161 224 1303) 68-70 Dickenson Rd, Rusholme

Biking Factory Shop (0161 773 2125) 424 Bury New Rd, Prestwich

Coffee Cranks Cooperative (07599 088 816) Central and South Manchester

Devereux Cycles (0161 973 5234) 45 Green Lane, Sale

Eddie McGrath Cycles (0161 748 2733) 31 Station, Urmston

Harry Hall Cycles (0161 236 5699) 67 Whitworth St, Manchester

Keep Pedalling (0161 222 601 5) 23 Hilton Street M1 1EL

Ken Foster's Cycle Logic (0161 881 7160) 374-376 Barlow Moor Rd, Chorlton-cum-Hardy

Lane End Cycles (0161 431 0777) 5 Lane End Rd, Burnage, M19 1WA

Manchester Cycle Exchange (0161 748 2532) 1 Brook Terrace, Barton Rd, Davyhulme

NW Mountain Bike Centre (0161 428 3311) 249 Stockport Rd, Cheadle

Popup Bikes (0161 839 0709) Arch 5 Corporation St. M4 4DG

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

Skidmores Cycles (0161 624 5912) 37 Union St, Oldham

Withington Cycles (0161 445 3492) 26 Burton Rd, Withington

www.gmcc.org.uk/join

CALENDAR

Details are correct at the time of printing but are subject to change.
Booking may be required for certain events or rides.

Where a web address is not listed more information about the event can be found online at either: www.gmcc.org.uk or www.loveyourbike.org

If you have an event to promote email the details to contact@gmcc.org.uk.
Our next issue of Ride will feature events from the 10th March to 9th June.

Breeze - Haigh “Christmas” Heights

Saturday 13th December

2:00pm - 4:45pm

Hockery Brook Public House, Hindley

Celebrate the 200th Breeze Wigan ride and deck the ~~halls~~ spokes with boughs of holly along with the rest of you for the Christmas themed rides.

Book online in advance.

Winter Solstice Audax

Sunday 22nd December

8:30am (finish by 21:58pm) • Bredbury, Stockport

If Rob Raikes' article on Audaxes in our last edition caught your interest then this 202km ride from Stockport through the flats of Cheshire might be for you. Lights and warm clothing will be essential for the shortest day of the year. Book online in advance at <http://www.aukweb.net/events/detail/14-456/>

Bells, Baubles, Bows and Breeze

Saturday 21st December

2:00pm - 5:45pm

Canal Side near Bottom Lock, Wigan

Fifteen mile ride along the delights of Leeds Liverpool Canal until you reach Pennington Flash then onwards to Leigh Sports Village with a midpoint cafe or pub stop.

Book online in advance.

Irwell River Park Bike Ride

Sunday 14th December

11:00am - 1:00pm

Salford Watersports Centre

Find out more about the Irwell River Park, its history and wildlife, and to discover a couple of Salford's hidden gems. Limited availability, book online in advance.

Saddleworth Saturday Social

Saturday 27th December

9:00am - 12:00pm

Java Bar Espresso, High Street, Uppermill

A sociable twenty-five mile ride through the cenic lanes, passes and valleys of Saddleworth, register online.

Bike Friday

Socialable rides for all to work or college in Greater Manchester held on the last Friday of the month.

Upcoming Dates: Friday 30th January, Friday 27th February
Google 'Bike Friday Manchester' for info.

Critical Mass

Manchester's Critical Mass convenes at 6:00pm outside Central Library on the last Friday of every month. It is a great way to meet other cyclists and to have a fun bike ride. The ride is gentle and everyone is welcome to come and celebrate the bicycle! To keep up to details with rides please visit:
<http://facebook.com/CriticalMassManchester/>

Meetings to organise campaigns are held on the second Monday of every month. At 9:00pm the group usually head for refreshments at a nearby pub.

Everyone is welcome to attend and contribute. Whether you are a member or not.

7:00pm

GMCC General Meetings

January 12 **February 9** **March 9**

February will be the Annual General Meeting of GMCC, where the officer roles of the organisation are for the coming year are filled by election. If you are interested in standing for any of the roles please express your intention by emailing contact@gmcc.org.uk. More details about the elections will also be confirmed at January's Meeting.

**Friends Meeting House,
Mount St, Manchester
M2 5NS**

There is bicycle parking at the left hand side of the building.

Training

BikeRight!

Freewheeling adult cycle training

Wednesdays

10th December, 7th January
2:00pm - 4:00pm

Saturdays

30th December, 10th January
10:00am - 12:00pm

Workplace Cycle Champions Network

Welcome workshops

Wednesday 14th January
5:00pm - 7:00pm

TfGM HQ, 2 Piccadilly Place,
Manchester

Advance booking on TfGM 'better by cycle' website.

Local Authority Cycle Forums

Manchester

Tuesday 9th December
5:30pm-7:30pm
Manchester Town Hall

Salford

Thursday 15 January
6:00pm - 8:30pm
Salford Civic Centre

Trafford

Tuesday 17th February
6:00pm-8:00pm
Trafford Town Hall

Stockport

Technical Subgroup
Thursday 11th December
Thursday 19th February

General Meeting

Wednesday 21st January
Wednesday 11th March

All 6:00pm-7:45pm at
Stockport Town Hall

'In the City of Bikes. The story of the Amsterdam Cyclist'

Pete Jordan

It's a slippery slope cycle campaigning. It's not long before reading a History/Memoir book about cyclists in Amsterdam sounds like a totally reasonable thing to do.

Thankfully this is a refreshing and entertaining read. As much a personal story as is a chronicle of events.

Pete Jordan has a passion for getting about on a bike. Not sport or tinkering with the mechanics, just the simple joy of getting about on two wheels. He arrives in Amsterdam to find out how he could help design American cities to be more cycle friendly but finds his spiritual home and place to settle and become a family. Inevitably comparisons with America's love affair with the car appear and reveal something of the price they paid for this captivation.

Amsterdam's history, how campaigning worked there and how their stubborn independence fought not only the Nazi occupiers but their own government to keep two wheels on the streets, despite repeated attempts to 'modernise' for the car. His writing is well researched, enjoyable and easy to read for anyone, not just cycle nerds.

Review by Jonathan Keenan, more information about the book including retailers is online.

<http://cityofbikes.com/>

What's missing?

- If you'd like a particular issue featured in a future issue then do let us know.
- We welcome submissions of content and articles.
The deadline for content for the Spring 2015 edition will be Thursday the 19th of February 2015.
- There will also be a number of advertising opportunities in the Spring 2015 issue of Ride.

All enquiries should be emailed to: nl@gmcc.org.uk

COMMUNITY



CYCLING



CLUBS

Anna Smith

Community Cycle Clubs; designed to #getGMcycling brought to you by TfGM & CTC

September 2014: Six glorious months lie ahead with a target to set up fifteen new community cycle clubs. Greater Manchester is my pedal powered playground. 8-80 years forms my age criteria. Any community group can be worked with. Off I go on my bicycle to find them.

2.5 months down the line and despite pedalling into an infamous Greater Manchester kind of winter, I have discovered phenomenal community bicycle spirit – formed in unique nooks of a seemingly ever expanding ginormous region. In varying levels of biking behaviour, here's who I've found so far.

Venture into the ample space of *Wigan Community Warehouse* you'll find creative upcycling in its every form, tucked into the corner is *Gearing Up*; a new bike recycling project stampeding forward into the community with realistic ambitions of repair. Volunteers are welcomed, bikes are donated and refurbished shinier bicycles with rejuvenated lives are re-introduced back into the world of Wigan and beyond. If it's bicycle riding you'd rather do around these regions, it's *Wigan Borough Community Cycle Club* you want to get involved with; the friendliest kind of led bike rides that take you to new and unusual places you'd never knew exist – everyone welcome; slow, speedy or somewhere in the middle. Seeing as brilliant grassroots bike projects like to help each other out, you'll often find *WBCCC* starting and ending their rides at *Gearing Up* headquarters café. Cosy coffees and winter pedalling – when's the next ride? **@GearingUpBikes** or **@trails4us** will tell all.

Head east to Bury and you'll discover the cosiest park imaginable with an emerging community café; *Up Your Welly* welcomes wide communities but paying particular attention to long-term unemployed and mental health patients. Beginner cycling sessions are currently underway; watch out Bury you're about to get busy with bikes. Manchester Road Park is where they're at. Up and over some hills into Rochdale and sitting by that great lake is *Hollingworth Water Adventure Centre* – as it says in the title but there are bikes there too! The bumpy kind... with chunky tyres and bouncing suspension-ready to be played on; early stages of the community club but positively gleaming with potential- find them **@holwac**.

Swooping down slightly south and to the east, it's all about the youths over at *Cycle-Ops* in Ashton – open sessions every Thursday welcome young people to build their own bikes from scratch. Their huge workshop plays the perfect host for next generation bicycle mechanics who proudly pedal away after departing with just a quid. A short pedal takes you over *Tameside Cycle Circuit*, where the biggest attending beginner cycle course I've ever seen is taking place with a large group of incredibly enthusiastic Asian women – with some follow up maintenance courses and hopefully some ride leader training we'll be all set to form an all-female club , a cycling force to be recognised.

Heading south along the Fallowfield Loop [Britain's longest urban cycle way in our amazing city] feeds you nicely into the southern hemisphere of Greater Manchester – time to go to Stockport. Just wait until you see the workshop at *Cera Cycloan*; the biggest bike recycling centre I've seen in Greater Manchester so far. Working with the hoards – from young offenders, to mental health patients, to student volunteers – it seems everyone is getting training to learn advanced bicycle mechanics. Fresh off the press is brand new monthly led rides and as predicted, everyone is welcome. Meet at CCHQ at 10am on the last Sunday of every month. **@ceracycloan** will keep you in touch with them.

A quick coffee at Stockport's exciting new cycle café; **@TandemCoffeeSK1** will fire you up suitably to re-join the Loop and end up at Platt Fields; everyone's favourite all biking encompassing urban park. Here you will find *Platt Fields Bike Hub* based in the old Boathouse – if you're a grassroots bicycle project you've probably used the tools or space already – if you fancy beginner training or joining in on the regular Ad-Hoc Hub Club rides, then you need to visit the friendly gang. New projects or ideas entirely welcome to add to the turbo supply of activities; **@plattfieldbikes** eagerly await your thoughts. One coffee is nice, but a second slug from **@CoffeeCrank**s trike if you're there on a Friday will fuel you up nicely to return once more to the Loop.

Ride to the end and hit the canal at Stretford to continue a highly pleasant traffic-free spin up to Altrincham. Fifteen primary schools are soon to be invited into the mix to put *Altrincham on Wheels* high up on the kiddie mass participation bicycle radar – an ambitious cluster of parents are powering forward with formidable plans that we hope will shift into fruition when the skies turn a bit warmer.

Hanging around in Trafford for a while is highly worth it, as there's plenty of other community bicycle action happening; *Chainlink* is another brand new bike recycling project set up with *BlueSCI* to help engage people with mental health difficulties through cycling. The similar lovely addition of community rides is also very much attached to the agenda; Rides are every Tuesday 1:00pm – 3:00pm at *Old Trafford Wellbeing Centre*. Based at 3 locations across the borough; take old bikes to donate or come and fix your own .Get in touch with **neil@chainlink.org.uk** to find out more.

Finally – as the clockwise community clubs cycling tour of Greater Manchester draws to a close, we'll take one stop off in Salford to marvel at a delightful bicycle mural attached to the new *MyCycle* project within the university. Wow what potential and space they have – for now there's super cheap bike hire up for grabs but watch this space: **@ussu_mycycle** for evolving cycling plans.

There's no doubt that these recent discoveries are only just scratching the surface of all the many community bicycle happenings doing great stuff across the boroughs – there's still room for more! Superb offers of training and support are up for grabs. If you are a community group who like the idea of injecting bicycles onto your agenda, then it's about time I shared the Community Clubs information: **anna.smith@tfgm.com**.

ST CRISPIN'S DAY: NIGHT RIDE, GREATER LONDON

I've done a few cyclosportives (organised rides with a fixed route over a set distance) in my time and the format is fairly standard: you arrive at the start first thing in morning and ride the route on skinny road bikes with occasional feed stations providing flapjacks, gels and energy drinks. So when I saw the St. Crispin's Day Night Ride, I was intrigued: a 100-mile ride designed not for roadies, but vintage bikes, fixies and whatever else you may want to ride; a hot meal along the way; a bottle of English wine; and even breakfast at the end. And being a night ride, there's plenty of time to get to the start. The only drawback: it's in London, but the night-riding aspect obviates the need for accommodation, so it was just a case of paying the entrance fee and train fare.

After a Saturday of guilt-free lounging, I loaded my trusty, dynamo-equipped tourer, Erik the Red, on to the 19:35 to Euston. From Euston Square I took the tube to Hammersmith (one of the few lines that allows non-folding bikes to be carried) and rode from there to the start at Chiswick – Google maps selecting a route along the banks of the Thames that was doubtless picturesque by day, but unlit and fox-infested by night.

Arriving at Chiswick Boathouse at 11:30 p.m, there was just enough time to register, collect my commemorative cap and stash my pannier when, at one minute past midnight, the torches (actual flame torches!) were lit at the gate and the ride was on. I found myself in a bunch of about 15 other riders as we headed into central London – Buckingham Palace, Trafalgar Square, St. Paul's Cathedral, London Bridge, Westminster Palace all a blur as I tried not to lose the group in traffic as dense as anything you'll see at rush-hour. After around an hour and a half in the capital's nocturnal chaos, the route took us back to the west and the quieter roads that would make up the rest of the ride.

With less-frequent stops at lights etc. the group started to spread out, each rider finding their own pace, and at about 30 miles in I found myself chatting to a young Canadian chap called Josh, also a lone entrant, who was to be my companion for the remaining 75 or so miles.

By now the roads had taken on a decidedly rural character, not unlike the Cheshire lanes: flat, potentially fast (provided you can see where you're going), largely empty of traffic and devoid

of street lighting. Here the dynamo lights really came into their own, casting a bright rectangle far enough ahead to spot pot-holes, debris and – critically – turns. I don't ride much in unlit conditions, and the extra concentration required was striking.

At 41 miles there appeared a most welcome right turn – into Haliford Mere fishing lodge, where we were spoilt with a selection of cake and hot drinks. Suitably fortified, and with the first stamp in our ride "passport", we continued up through Windsor (54 miles), passing through Eton (home of the famous school), where we noted that the only things catering to our future elite at 4:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning are a strip joint and a pizza takeaway.

Twyford (66 miles) is an important staging post on the ride: not only is it the westernmost point of the route, it is crucially where the hot meal is served and the wine distributed. On other long rides it's easy to tire of the proffered sickly-sweet high-energy fare, so it was extremely satisfying to sit down to a hearty bowl of stew. (Quite why they distribute the wine here and not at the end remains a mystery.) So warmed, sated, with a second stamp and around an extra kilo of cargo, we resumed the ride.

By now it was about 6:30 a.m. (the clocks having gone back that night) and the sunrise we were hoping for was obscured by cloud cover. By way of consolation we were treated to a splendid view of Venus hovering just over the horizon. Whether it was the stew in our bellies or the "lizard effect" of the returning daylight, we were able to pick up our pace over this, the most undulating section, and overtake for once and for all the group of Bromptoneers who had been hovering just in front of us for a few too many miles. Not that we were racing, but there was a little pride at stake...

At around 90 miles we were back at Haliford Mere and a severely depleted selection of cake. By this stage muscles were starting to creak, so, third stamp collected, we set off before anything seized up too irreperably.

We hit the actual 100 mile-mark in Twickenham and continued from there to the finish at 104 miles (there may have been a wrong turn somewhere!) at around 9:30 a.m. There we received our final stamp confirming the century, had our photo taken with the podium girls (sic) and claimed our free breakfast roll. I bade Josh farewell, showered, changed and made my way back to Euston and ultimately to bed.

The St. Crispin's Day Night Ride is an experience definitely worth having. 100 miles may sound like a long way, but the terrain is largely flat, there's plenty of time to complete the course and the atmosphere is very much one of a leisure ride as opposed to a sporting endurance event. Falling at the end of October, the weather can be capricious, but this year we were lucky with dry, still, mild conditions. I'd definitely do it again.

Nick Hubble

Nick is a freelance translator and rider of bikes based in Prestwich. He co-runs the Prestwich Pootlers (@pootlers) group promoting social bike rides in north and central Manchester.

Cyclenation-CTC Conference

The annual Cyclenation-CTC conference 2014 took place on 22 November at Lambeth Town Hall, hosted by London Cycling Campaign. Campaigners from all over the UK and Ireland made the trip to London to share their knowledge and experience.

The day started with a Cyclenation EGM which was well-attended, and after some discussion and amendments all the motions were passed. Then the conference began, introduced by Mustafa Arif, Vice Chair of London Cycling Campaign (and chair of its Campaigns Committee), and CTC's Chief Exec Paul Tuohy.

Jennifer Brathwaite, Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability at the London Borough of Lambeth (who kindly sponsored the event) introduced the opening plenary. She talked about how to promote cycling as a normal activity. She says she can't talk about clean air, or health, without talking about cycling - it can be a solution to many of the issues councils face, and it's time it became a mainstream activity.

Naomi Green, Head of Cycling Strategy at the Department for Transport, delivered a speech from Transport Minister Robert Goodwill, and presented on the Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan. David Cox OBE, Chair of CTC, talked about the 'cycling revolution' in Birmingham. He says if we can make Birmingham cycle friendly, we can do it anywhere. John Richfield, Urban Cycling Transport Designer at Bristol City Council, talked about progress in Bristol. Chris Kenyon, co-founder of CyclingWorks, explained how their campaign has demonstrated a huge amount of business support for the proposed North-South and East-West cycle superhighways in London. Paul Gasson from Waltham Forest Cycling Campaign talked about the Waltham Forest mini-Holland. £30 million is due to be spent on some serious changes.

After lunch, delegates heard about design standards from our experts. Phil Jones of Phil Jones Associates, lead author of Active Travel (Wales) Act design guidance, talked through the guidance which has been in force since 25 September. Brian Deegan, Principal Technical Planner at Transport for London, talked about the new London Cycling Design Standards, which he led on developing, and 10 things from the LCDS that he thinks will help create great cycling infrastructure. John Dales, Director at Urban Movement, talked about the long-awaited International Cycling Best Practice Study, which will be due out once the London Cycling Design Standards have been finalised. Martin Lucas-Smith of Cambridge Cycling Campaign, lead author of the Making Space for Cycling guidance, talked through UK guidance and some solutions to the poor quality approaches currently permitted.

The conference finished with a choice of workshops on working with local authorities in their new duties on public health; working towards an inclusive cycling policy; or the next steps on Space for Cycling. A final Q&A with our workshop presenters and Cyclenation board members, talking about some of the key learnings from the day and challenges ahead brought the day to a close.

To find out more, and view all the presentations from the day visit <http://bit.do/cnctc>

Mustafa Arif
Chair of Campaigns

GM Cycling Campaign
@GMcycling

And we're off...
@ma499 of @london_cycling welcomes attendees to #CNconf14

11:59 AM - 22 Nov 2014

2 RETWEETS



LdnCyclingCampaign
@london_cycling

Current cycle spending is £5 per person
@transportgovuk aims for £10 by 2020 - with help from others! #CNconf14

12:42 PM - 22 Nov 2014

2 RETWEETS

CTC
@CTC_Cyclists

Birmingham #cycling revolution is no joke says @davidcox65 as TRACOS report has shown #cnconf14

12:55 PM - 22 Nov 2014

2 RETWEETS 4 FAVORITES

jayne_ctc
@jayne_ctc

@CyclenationUK mini Holland in @wfcycling what will it look like?
#cnconf14 lots of activity walthamforest.gov.uk/miniholland

1:29 PM - 22 Nov 2014

4 RETWEETS 1 FAVORITE

Cyclenation UK
@CyclenationUK

What worked for @CyclingWorksLDN : corporate look to the campaign and clear messages/questions. A few early positive employers. #CNconf14

1:25 PM - 22 Nov 2014

2 RETWEETS

Alex Ingram
@nuttyxander

There was no sitting in a big chair, chomping cigars plotting. Instead @CyclingWorksLDN has 6 volunteers flying busy routes. #cnconf14

1:24 PM - 22 Nov 2014

1 RETWEET 1 FAVORITE



GMCC is a voluntary group working to make cycling in Greater Manchester quicker, safer, easier and more enjoyable.

Less than 2% of journeys in Greater Manchester are by bicycle because many people who would like to cycle are intimidated by the quantity and speed of motorised traffic. GMCC is campaigning to change this.

Membership is open to all and free for the first year.
To join the campaign visit our website.

Officers & Contacts

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Secretary - Jonathan Keenan

Membership Secretary - Joanna Long

Policy Officer - Dave Butler

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