

Autumn 2014
www.gmcc.org.uk

The front cover has
been designed by
Ryan Lloyd

**How long have you lived in
Greater Manchester for?**

I've lived in Manchester all my life. I grew up in the south of Manchester in a place called Wythenshawe. I moved to the city centre for a brief period and have decided to live in West Didsbury.

Do you cycle?

If so, how often and why?

I cycle pretty much every day and love getting out on my bike where possible. One cycle route I'd recommend is the orbital cycle route around Manchester airport, especially the areas near runway two.

I enjoy drifting into the natural environment away from urban structure.

**What kind of design practice
are you involved in?**

As a designer, I consider my work tactile in the variety of mediums I use from digital to more hands on elements like screen-printing. I enjoy experimenting within design and getting lost within trial and errors of creating a final piece of work I feel chuffed about.

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The quarterly publication of the Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign

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.

Our aim is to increase cycle use in Greater Manchester by ensuring that cycling is promoted as a cheap, healthy, sustainable transport choice within local authority strategies, schemes and programmes for all types of trips including, commuting, shopping and leisure.

Officers and Contacts

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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 Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign.

Any corrections or clarifications should be sent using the above contacts.

Responsibility for any content of any links contained within this publication lies with their respective owners.

Officer Reports

Jonathan Keenan Secretary

Freelance Photographer and life long cyclist (apart from the bit where I never got off my motorbike) and currently obsessing about proper alignment of obscure French mudguards.

The summer quarter has rushed past with the silly season of holidays making planning and campaigning harder as there's always some key person away, but then getting out on our bikes comes first. Despite this plenty has been going on.

I'm pleased to say our Twitter account @GMcycling now has over 2200 followers including MPs, councillors and campaigners from around the world. It's helped journalists write and corrected their wrongs, promoted countless cycling events and shared hundreds of links to interesting and relevant information. Our Facebook page is slowly getting a bit more attention from us and starting to become a useful resource to run alongside our Twitter account.

GMCC had a great day with lots of activity around our stall at Manchester Skyride.

This is a very good way for us to connect with all sorts of people, from all over Greater Manchester, who would otherwise never know our organisation exists. I had a few interesting conversations myself in the morning. A young chap in full lycra, helmet and shades listened politely as I waxed lyrical about infrastructure and making routes safe for 8 to 80 year olds but I could feel as his eyes slowly glazed over. He'll get there one day. However, huge numbers of people were out with their kids or had come having taken up cycling again in their retirement. The people we managed to speak to really started to understand that days cycling on Skyride should, and really could, be every day for their kids and them; to get to school, work, shops or wherever they choose.

Many people came to say how they had tried cycling to work once but got scared off; to which I'd reply "That's exactly why we exist! Join us!"

I intend to build on this for next year to make it a key moment for GMCC to spread the word about what we stand for and how we campaign to achieve it.

Jonathan Fingland Chair

As a 70s child I grew up with various bikes - from primary school Raleighs, through ET inspired BMXs to a hybrid/MTB - before following the then natural progression of getting a driving licence and car at 17. Delivery jobs helped fund my college years, then a suburban location led to a decade of car-dependency that featured only occasional local rides.

As traffic levels and congestion grew I decided to move closer to the city; specifically choosing to live right by a traffic-free cycle route. After learning more about the National Cycle Network I became a Sustrans ranger, then was encouraged to attend the Councils' cycle forums and join GMCC. Within 5 years of the move my now numerous bikes had become my main form of transport; the car insurance wasn't renewed; and I became more active in the campaign group - working to improve our attractiveness, diversity, capacity and effectiveness.

In 2012 I had my first involvement with Cyclenation, the national federation of campaign groups, helping facilitate the "Love Cycling, Go Dutch" conference at Manchester Town Hall - an event that galvanised or developed people's belief that major changes could and should be made. In 2013, inspired and supported by London Cycling Campaign, GMCC held its largest ever participation event with approximately 500 people riding around the Conservative party conference demanding safe #space4cycling.

In 2014 we've gone from two Officers to five and I've been elected as Chair - it's still work in progress but we're moving in the right direction! Also in 2014 members of the Cyclenation Board approached me seeking some new, 'younger' blood. A few discussions later and I was encouraged enough to get involved there too, striving for similar improvements at a national level: groups and campaigns that people want to get involved in; for cycling that's effective, accessible to all and feels safe.

New Officers

At the June 2014 GMCC General Meeting two new officers were elected. Jonathan Fingland as Chair and Dave Butler as Policy Officer. They will serve along with the other three elected Officers until the February 2015 AGM where new elections will be held.

Dave Butler Policy Officer

I have been cycling in and around Manchester for 45 years. I have always used a bike as my preferred means of local transport. I have also been lucky enough to cycle extensively in the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, and Canada, and have done the UK and French "end-to-ends". My professional background is in town planning, policy analysis and research, with 30 years working in local government and 10 years as a director of a small company specialising in geographical information, and have been involved in cycling campaigning for many years.

As a campaigning group, GMCC needs to be clear what it stands for, and to make its voice heard clearly and forcefully.

Attitudes to cycling are starting to shift, and we are now being frequently consulted about schemes in the planning stages.

We need an agreed set of policies that we can use to lobby the likes of TfGM and the planning and highways authorities, and to draw on when we are consulted. The role of the policy officer is to make sure this is in place and, with the help of GMCC members, I want to do this over the next few months. This needn't be a lengthy or onerous process; there is an emerging consensus about what constitutes quality cycling provision, and plenty of good material which we can utilize. I hope we can pull this together in a series of meetings and online discussions during the Autumn.



#space4cycling

Monday 22nd September 2014

Campaign Ride



Keen readers will have already noted that last GMCC's #space4cycling ride past the Conservative Party Conference in 2013 has already been mentioned in this issue.

This year the Labour party is in town with their conference and it is time to show the people that occupy the opposite benches in Westminster that there are hundreds (hopefully thousands) of ordinary people from Greater Manchester and beyond who want roads that are safer to cycle on.

I'm sure there are some people either thinking (or perhaps it's lurking in the back of their mind), what's the point of this?

Well we live in times of a very crowded political agenda, and constrained public spending within certain areas and we need to make an impact.

For the remainder of this and the next Parliament billions, yes billions, of pounds will be spent on road building. Roads for cars, buses, lorries. Or in other words roads for vehicles reliant on fossil fuels.

Roads which will become congested. Roads which encourage people to sit down with their foot down rather than stand up and make their feet turn. Roads which pollute the air that we breathe.

Until we turn the tide of government spending in favour of non-polluting, congestion beating, family friendly, active travel (cycling), these campaign rides will need to continue. The visual impact of a mass cycle ride on media, politicians and the general public alike is unique to us.

There is also another important aspect to these campaign rides. The safety in numbers means people who ordinarily wouldn't cycle every day get a chance to ride in a much more comfortable environment.

Gatherings like the the upcoming one in September also remind us of the community that we belong to. A friendly one, filled with ordinary people who happen to ride a bicycle. Ordinary people like you.

Ordinary people who want to be safe when riding a bike.

So save the date.

6:00pm, Monday
22nd September.

Keep updated with the details on the website, invite your friends & family, and most importantly, ride.

www.gmcc.org.uk/s4c



Skyride

3 August 2014

Aless Tsitsimpis reports on the GMCC stall at Manchester's Skyride where thousands of cyclists took to traffic-free streets for a very hi-vis affair.



Back in June during one of the monthly GMCC meetings I volunteered to be part of the team that would represent GMCC at the annual Skyride event in Manchester. So early in the morning of Sunday 3rd August I cycled to Albert Square along with a trailer loaded with promotional material.

While setting up at our stall the crowds started gathering and just before the official start was announced at 10am Albert Square was filled by people of all ages along with their bikes and sporting the fluorescent Sky Ride bibs provided.

The weather held off for most of the day resulting in a party atmosphere, with the soundtrack helpfully provided by sounds of the calypso orchestra opposite. The very few brief showers did not manage to dampen the spirits of the crowd.

Throughout the day I was joined by members and friends of GMCC who provided invaluable help in promoting GMCC to people visiting our stall. Local media have reported more than 15,000 people taking part in the event. Not surprisingly, lots of these people visited our stand over the duration of the event and hopefully the majority left our stall with a better understanding of GMCC and its aims. By the end of the day most of our promotional material had almost run out and we've received very encouraging comments. Hopefully there will be some new members joining us to assist with our current and future campaigns.



Member Benefits

There are a number of GMCC member benefits (including delivery of this quarterly direct to your door or inbox), voting rights at meetings and being able to get your views and interests being represented directly to local authorities backed up by other members.

There are also a number of bike shops and retailers that offer discounts between 5% and 10% to GMCC members with 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 1 EL
- 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, M1 9 1 WA
- 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

Q: Are Lambeth Bikehangars coming to Manchester?

A: Maybe.

Firstly, a Lambeth Bikehangar is an award winning on-street and secure cycle shelter. It can protect bikes from the weather, vandalism and theft. It takes up a similar amount of space as an on-street car parking space.



We've recently helped a member from Chorlton canvas their neighbours, seeking support for a secure bike storage unit to be located on their road. The survey results were more positive than we could have hoped for and

Manchester City Council are starting to look at possible funding options. Nothing is yet guaranteed at the time of printing but we hope to have some more news by the next issue in the Winter.

COAST 2 SEA

The Sustrans “Sea to Sea” (C2C) trail, billed as “the UK’s most popular challenge cycle route”, had been beckoning for some time, so in August I loaded up Erik the Red, my trusty touring bike, and caught an early train north.

The C2C offers two starting points (Workington or Whitehaven) and two destinations (Tynemouth by Newcastle or Roker promenade by Sunderland). I opted to start in Whitehaven – a slightly longer and more challenging route up to Keswick – and to end at Roker.

Day 1

Route 71 from Whitehaven follows the Ennerdale railway path, which climbs steadily towards the Lake District National Park. Past Rowrah the trail moves on to quiet rural roads where I caught my first views of the region’s stunning scenery – and an inkling of the climbs to come.

The trail then passes through Whinlatter Forest, which is popular with mountain bikers. Here the official route follows steep, unmade forest trails or offers an on-road option for road cyclists. Deciding a tourer isn’t strictly a road bike, I opted to go off-road, and very quickly appreciated why mountain bikes have suspension.

The route then takes quiet roads into Keswick, from where it follows another old railway line and quiet rural roads towards Penrith, where I had arranged to stop overnight. The rather plush (in hostel terms), cycle-friendly Wayfarers Hostel with its large bike store, drying room and fully equipped bike workshop in the basement is definitely worth recommending.

Day 2

Refreshed after a sound night’s sleep, I embarked on what was always going to be the most challenging part of the ride. The climb up to Hartside is four miles long with an ascent of 1,200 vertical feet and rises to the exposed tops of the moors, which were being battered by almost gale-force winds. At the top is a most welcome café, where I stopped to load up on carbs (and a little grease) and shelter from the worst storm of the day. From Hartside there’s a long descent into Leadgate, where the whole up/down cycle repeats for the rest of the afternoon (including Black Hill, the highest point on the whole of the National Cycle Network).

Really starting to feel the climbs, I was glad to reach Stanhope, just five miles from my intended destination at Edmondbyers. However, there was a sting in the tail: Crawleyside Bank out of Stanhope is a gruelling ascent (up to 15% gradient) back up to the blustery moors, and this was without a doubt the toughest climb of the day. Reaching the turn for the next section of the C2C, I could continue up yet another hill, and away from the official route, to Edmondbyers, or risk missing the hostel by continuing downwards along the signed route. So I risked it, taking the splendid Waskerley Way towards Consett, and duly missed the youth hostel. Despite knowing that Consett offers very little in the way of accommodation (hence the choice of Edmondbyers for the night), I pressed on, and fortunately spied a sign on a small bridge advertising accommodation for cyclists. After a couple of phone calls I was safely ensconced in the Hownsgill Bunkhouse, just 30 seconds off the trail.

Day 3

The final section of the C2C from Consett to Sunderland via Stanley (about 25 miles) is an absolute breeze: almost entirely flat or downhill along surfaced, traffic-free bike paths. The weather was sunny, the wind had dropped and it was quite simply a glorious morning’s ride. The route approaches Sunderland along the river Wear and ends at Roker promenade, where, in the apparent absence of an official C2C end marker, I deemed a shiny black obelisk to be the end of the route and posed (the bike) for the obligatory triumphant photographs. From Roker it was a further 20 miles to Newcastle station and home.

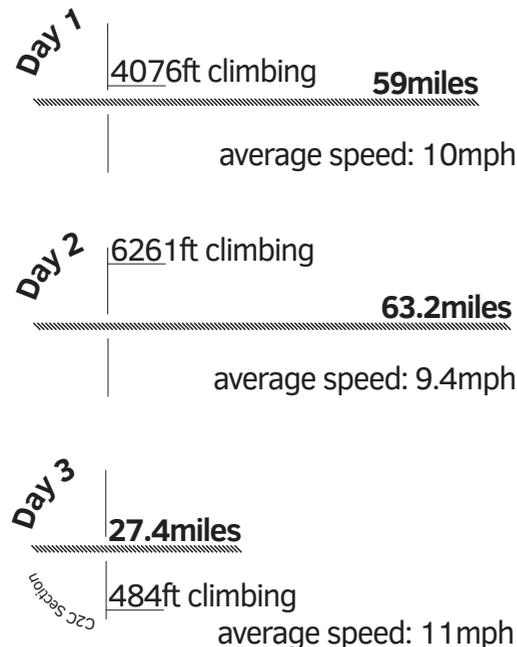
The Experience

Having completed other “challenge” coast-to-coast rides, I was under no illusion that this would be a pootle in the park, and of the three I’ve done I’d definitely say this was the hardest: the climbs are stubborn and persistent, the route passes through some pretty bleak terrain and the wind added an extra layer of difficulty. That said, the experience was thoroughly exhilarating: quite apart from the sense of achievement of having ridden a bicycle across the country, there are countless moments you would never experience by any other form of transport: undulating roads that resemble a natural pump track; hitting a perfect tail-wind and being blown uphill; long, fast descents where you are propelled by gravity alone for a seeming eternity. Further, the C2C is 20 years old this year, and represents a microcosm of what can be achieved when a cycling culture is positively nurtured: cycle-friendly eateries and accommodation enticing you in; patient drivers; road signage urging care of and care by cyclists; even honesty boxes outside private homes proffering flapjacks to the hungry rider.

So yes, the route definitely deserves its “challenge” label. But with a little training, realistic planning and a healthy dose of determination, it’s certainly an experience worth having.

Nick Hubble

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



Social Media

#space4cycling ?

Jonathan Keenan

Whilst browsing through my twitter feed one afternoon I had something of a moment of clarity. Clarity is a rare thing to me so I decided to pay attention to it.

Cycle lanes should be 2m wide. 'How wide?', yes, that's the recommended width that we hardly ever get to see. Instead we get a few cm of faded, broken paint covered in glass and rotten leaves. If we're lucky it's not under a parked car or delivery van or taking us the worst way into a junction.

I'd just looked at a picture of a couple of people holding up a Space for Cycling banner on the pavement next to a road where a car was parked in a cycle lane. It got me thinking about low-fi guerilla campaigning and using social media to make clear points whilst having a bit of fun*.

The idea is very simple. Take a 2m long print with a ruler at the bottom and '#Space4Cycling ?' printed across the middle. This is now more than just a fragile bit of paper, it's a campaigning banner, and it only costs £10.00 here's my guide to what to do next.

**This is not fun if you get run over or arrested so try not to blindly wander about the roads, damage anyone's preciousness or upset the local Neighbourhood Watch.*

1. Ride about for a (probably very) short while until you come across a particularly bad section of supposed infrastructure or a place where some is desperately needed. We all have our favourites.

2. Place the banner across the cycle path or wherever you think a cycle lane should be, preferably immediately in front of a parked car, giant pothole, cyclist dismount sign... (you get the idea).



3. Take a picture on your fancy smart phone showing the banner and it's context in the road.

4. Tweet and/or Facebook the image with whatever comment you like but include #Space4Cycling and @GMcycling in the text and the twitter account for your local authority or councillor if you know it.



5. GMCC twitter account will retweet any good ones it happens upon plus anyone that follows the national space4cycling hashtag will see it and maybe do the same. We'll figure out a way of saving the best for a wall of shame and see how it grows.

6. Local MPs and councillors are shamed and chastised by our withering criticism and divert all available funds to implementing the soon-to-be-devised GMCC Greater Manchester strategic cycle map.

(Okay, 6. is a bit optimistic but every little helps).

Template banners to print yourself are available on the website now to download.
www.gmcc.org.uk

MY FIRST FIVE AUDAXES

This year I have been doing Audaxes, not many and not the great big butch ones, but it has been fun. I did one some years ago with a friend. It involved riding what seemed like a very long way up an awful lot of hills, but it was very friendly and sociable; however, we didn't get 'in' in time. Instead of stopping for tea and a sandwich at the cafe where all the other participants were queueing up, we went to the pub across the road, had a nice lunch and a couple of pints. I'm sure it was the time taken for the second pint that did it.

An Audax is briefly a long hard ride on the road. There is a route with a route card, from which, with the aid of a map and a bit of time you can work out exactly where you should be going, unless of course you use a Garmin or suchlike. And there are time limits within which you have to reach certain checkpoints, which are entered on your Brevet or Certificate by one of the organisers.

Last year, I was persuaded by my friend Cathy to enter an Audax of 75 miles from Hebden Bridge out and back again via every big hill that could be shoe-horned in on a route that went in a big circle through the magnificent scenery of Wharfedale and much more. We did stop for a half at Appletreewick and duly got in twenty minutes too late, but it was a fabulous ride, if a touch exhausting.

Undeterred, we entered an event this year going from Cheadle South West to the edge of Shropshire for 45 miles into quite a strong headwind, followed by 45 miles back by a different route with the wind behind. As it got dark, we thought we had blown it, but pressed on, to find that we had finished with three quarters of an hour to spare. Victory! I had broken my duck!

Then we did a rather masochistic one called Todmorden Loops, 75 miles and 2850 metres of climbing, including Cragg Vale, which was the easy bit. There were some real killers on that one. We packed after the second loop of three, due to injuries, but nailed it as a Perm. (Yes, Audax has its own language too) a month or so later.

In the last week, we have done a couple of Grimpeurs. (Climbers) in the Peak District, one taking us through the White Peak from Marple via Monsal Head, Biggin, Monyash, Miller's Dale and a whole lot more scenery and hills, to drag ourselves wearily back to the finish at a Pub by a canal. The next one went along the edge of the Peak District, again up and down every available hill, then over to Longnor, back up, up, up again to the big road, then down to Buxton, then more interminable hills and back to Marple again.

I really make it sound like fun, don't I; but strangely it is. There is a strong camaraderie among the riders, a lot of whom are not only older than me, but faster too, but then I have never been a racer. The organisation is minimal but sufficient to give you a sense of an adventure combined with being able to find your way around. And the routes are just fantastic, taking you through all the best places and avoiding horrible big roads wherever possible.

For the real keenies, there are Audaxes of 200km, 400km, 600km, 1000km, and the holy grail the Paris-Brest-Paris, a 1200 km Audax that runs every fourth year. I'm happy to splash about in the shallows of the Brevet Populaire. 100-150 kilometres is plenty for me.

If you fancy a bit of a challenge and the odd day out in beautiful scenery, why not give it a try?

Rob Raikes

If you're keen to give it a go, or just want to know more visit <http://www.aukweb.net>



Join us.

We have a stronger and louder voice when we campaign together.

www.gmcc.org.uk/join

As an individual you can only say, do and campaign so much. Joining together with other people that cycle, or who want to cycle in Greater Manchester, GMCC works to represent cycling interests with local authorities and other organisations. We are run on an entirely voluntary basis, 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 add your voice to our campaigns, join now to become a part of GMCC.

Your first year as a member is free, and afterwards we ask for a small membership fee to help finance our campaigns and activities, including this quarterly publication.

If you're already a member, remember and renew your membership and why not get a friend, colleague or family member to join our campaign.

Total 20 Manchester Moves Closer

Vincent Walsh

Old news can be good news. Traditionally the media struggle to fill their pages and schedules in August. In May 2013 Manchester Council announced, "New 20 mph speed limits covering, some of east and south Manchester: Gorton, Longsight, Bradford, Miles Platting, Newton Heath, Ancoats, Clayton, Hulme, Moss Side, Rusholme and Fallowfield. In total 16% of the road network." The Traffic Regulation Orders were published in February 2014. The following month I reported a gathering at Clayton Park to mark the first stage of implementation. There was little media interest.

On 13 August the council tried again, repeating their mantra 20 is Enough with an announcement the Manchester Evening News carried on its front page, "A third of Manchester's roads have become 20 mph zones. Over 1,100 streets, covering 111 miles, are included in the scheme aimed at making streets safer. The changes, which come in on Monday morning, cover three main areas - parts of Hulme, Moss Side and Rusholme in the south, Ancoats, Clayton, Miles Platting and Newton Heath in the north and Longsight, Gorton and Bradford to the east (list looks familiar??). Longsight councillor and 20mph Czar Luthfur Rahman said, "This is something that has been driven(sic) by residents of Manchester. There are three main pilot areas and eventually we would like all residential streets in the city 20mph, subject to funding."

The MEN editorial was very supportive. Under the headline, "Streets Safer at 20mph Limit", it declared, "Anyone who has done a speed awareness course to avoid points on their licence will tell you one of the most sobering parts of the course is learning the difference in a child's injuries if it is hit by a car doing 30 versus 20mph. Commuters trying to take a cut through to avoid the rush hour traffic may moan about it, but how many parents will feel more confident about letting their child play out or walk to school? It's a great move to make our streets safer which we should all welcome."

The following Monday 18 August the subject dominated the Allan Beswick breakfast show on Radio Manchester with 20's Plenty campaign founder and director Rod King interviewed. Later in the day I stood in my street being filmed by ITV Granada Reports for a package also featuring Roadpeace champion June Webb broadcast that evening. BBC North West Tonight also ran the story.

Interest spread to the cycling press, Rod King told Cycling Weekly, "We are delighted Manchester is joining the growing list of our iconic cities who are rejecting the national 30mph speed limit as being not fit for purpose for their residential streets. Already 13 million people or 20% of the population live in places like Manchester where they are reducing limits and vehicle speed. And of course cycling and active travel is one of the biggest winners from this initiative."



It is now 30 months since the momentous unanimous Manchester council decision to support a 20mph default residential limit. The legal and consultation process has taken its course and now those formerly advisory signs are legally binding. They will need to be enforced by a combination of targeted policing reinforced by the hearts and minds of communities enjoying calmer safer streets.

We must all keep up the pressure to create a Total 20 City (and wider conurbation). Under the headline, "Now bring 20mph across the city" the MEN on 21 August carried my letter, "Manchester Council is to be congratulated for recognising that 20 is Enough by implementing 20mph limits on one third of the city's streets. It is appropriate that public health money is funding the process as Manchester has among the worst health statistics in the country.

Mancunians are sicker and die earlier than elsewhere in the UK. Not only will a lower speed limit reduce the number and severity of road injuries - particularly of children - it will have other positive impacts. More of us will be encouraged to walk, cycle, play in the streets and chat with our neighbours, benefitting physical and mental health. Wigan, Rochdale and Bolton have made a similar commitment - let the other boroughs follow suit.

I look forward to the day when Manchester is a Total 20 city and the whole conurbation enjoys the calmer, more pleasant environment that comes with slower speeds.

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/calendar

www.loveyourbike.org

Exhibition

Co-operation on Wheels:
A Journey into
Co-operative Cycling
Rochdale Pioneers Museum

Tuesday to Saturday
10:00am to 5:00pm
Until September 27th

Bicycle Jumble Sale

Sunday 28th September &
Saturday 25th October

10:00am - 3:00pm
Urban Cycle Centre, Unit 2,
Outwood Country Park



**RIDE AT LABOUR
CONFERENCE
22.09.14 • 6:00PM**

Details online at:
www.gmcc.org.uk/s4c

Bike Friday

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

Friday 26th September
Friday 31st October
Friday 28th November

[Click here for more info.](#)

Social Rides

GMCC holds monthly social bike rides through the year. Discover pleasant, low traffic routes out of the city, and visit places with scenic, cultural and historical interest. The rides always call at a café, pub or restaurant for sustenance, liquid refreshments and plenty of cycling chat!

September 18th
October 24th
5:30pm for 6:00pm departure
Albert Square, Manchester

No need to join or sign up, just turn up and ride. We ride at a gentle pace with a ride leader and back marker.
social@gmcc.org.uk

TfGM Discovery Rides

Sunday 5th October
10:00am
Portland Basin Museum,
Ashton-under-Lyne

Sunday 12th October
10:00am
Heaton Moor Park,
Stockport

Book online at
[http://betterbycycle.
eventbrite.co.uk/](http://betterbycycle.eventbrite.co.uk/)

Breeze - Ride the Lines

Wednesdays
10th, 17th September
7:00pm-8.30pm
Bulls Head (Toby Carvery)
Car Park

Breeze - Astley Amble

Saturday 13th September
10:00am - 2.30pm
Canal Side near Bottom Lock

Sunday 14th September

Skyride: Rolling around Rivington!

9:00am - 12:00pm
Luciano's at The Millstone

Skyride: Trans-Pennine Trail - A Route to Lymm

10:00am - 1:15pm
Sale Water Park

Skyride: Ramble Round Rivington Reservoirs

10:00am - 12:30pm
Rivington Barn Hall (The
Top Barn) Car Park

Discover the Fallowfield Loop

Monday 15th September
6:30pm - 8:30pm
Debdale Park

British Heart Foundation Manchester to Blackpool Night Ride

Saturday 26 September
10:00pm - 8:00am (Sunday) - Starts from Trafford Centre

The fourth annual charity ride from the heart of the city to the seaside, the route takes in 52 miles from Greater Manchester through Lancashire's country lanes and ending up in Blackpool by sunrise. Registration is required and conditions will apply.

Trans-Pennine Trail 25th Anniversary Family Ride

Saturday 13th September
10:00am - 2:00pm
Love Lane Park, Heaton Norris, Stockport

Skyride: Manchester Airport Orbital Cycleway

10:00am - 12:00pm
Wythenshawe Forum

Skyride: Marvellous Meccano Meander

10:00am - 12:00pm
Leverhulme Park
Community Leisure Centre

Irwell River Park Bike Ride

11:00am - 1:00pm
Salford Watersports Centre

Sunday Sundae 60k

Sunday 28th September
9:30am - 4:00pm
Sale Water Park

Wheels for All

Leverhulme Park
Community Club
Wednesdays
6:00pm - 7:00pm
Thursdays
10:00am - 12:00pm

Bolton Arena
Thursdays
5:30pm - 6:30pm

Castle Hill Centre
Mondays
4:00pm - 5:00pm

Cleavley Athletics Track,
Salford
Thursdays
1:30pm - 3:30pm
Fridays
10:00am - 3:00pm
Saturdays
10:00am - 1:00pm

Debdale Park,
Manchester
Thursdays
10:00am - 12:00pm
Sundays
10:30am - 12:30pm

Robin Park Arena, Wigan
Tuesdays
10:30am - 1:30pm (16+)

Leigh Sports Village,
Wigan
Thursdays
10:30am - 1:30pm (16+)

Campaigning and Forums

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

Friends Meeting House,
Mount St, Manchester
M2 5NS

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

October
13

November
10

December
8

Critical Mass

Manchester's Critical Mass convenes at 6:00pm outside Central Library on the last Friday of every month.

26th September
31st October
28th November

Cyclenation and CTC National Conference

Saturday 22nd November
Lambeth Town Hall
www.cyclenation.org.uk

Manchester Cycle Forum

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

Salford Cycle Forum

Thursday 9th October
6:00pm - 8:30pm
Salford Civic Centre

Stockport Council's Public Cycle User Group

Technical Subgroup
Wednesday 10th September
Thursday 13th November

General Meeting

Wednesday 15th October
Thursday 11th December

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

Training

BikeRight!

Freewheeling adult cycle training
Wednesdays
10th, 17th, 24th September
4:00pm - 6:00pm

Saturdays

13th, 17th, September
20th, 27th
10:00am - 12:00pm
1:00pm - 3:00pm

Simply Cycling

All ability cycling sessions
Fridays
19th, 26th September
9:00am - 3:00pm

Tuesday 23rd September
9:00am - 3:00pm

Both at Wythenshawe Park
Athletics Track

Got an event to promote?
Email contact@gmcc.org.uk



Interview

Carol Ferra is a Sale based storyteller, writer and cyclist. Her latest book entitled 'Memoirs of a Madcap Cyclist' is part of a series of one hundred books each containing one hundred stories that in turn have one hundred words. This is the first time that she has written about cycling, and Carol's stories look at all aspects of cycling from ages eight to eighty at home in Greater Manchester and further afield. We asked her some questions about the book and cycling in general. In case you are wondering, yes, this introduction is also exactly one hundred words long.

How long have you been cycling for?

I cycled regularly as a young child, got out of the habit a bit as a teenager, but rekindled my love of cycling when I went to University, as Manchester is very cycle-friendly for students!

I kept the cycling up after graduating, and once my children started school it saved time on school runs and commuting to work. Nowadays I cycle all over the place on my "little old lady" bike. I'm lucky to have so many cycleways locally to choose from, and I've found car drivers and pedestrians generally courteous and considerate in my encounters with them.

How did you begin writing and storytelling professionally?

I started out as a freelance storyteller in 2012. I had worked in a day nursery and my storytelling skills were frequently praised by children, staff and parents. I decided that life's too short not to do what you love, so I made the break, jacked in the day job, and

set myself up as “Short Story Lady”, which is doing really well. I do a lot of work in schools and libraries, and get plenty of bookings from book festivals and events. I still find time to write, I use writing as a way to develop my narrative style, and to reach a wider audience with my stories.

What made you start writing about cycling?

Storytellers have an unusual way of looking at the world. As a cyclist, I have experienced some embarrassing, painful, and downright comical moments. I was talking to Sharon Richards, my publisher, and she asked if I'd consider writing about my experiences as a cyclist. I jotted down a few stories to show her, and realised that I had a lot to say about life on two wheels. The more I looked into it, the more I realised that the term “cyclist” covers a huge range of people, circumstances and experiences. Cycling is about far more than just owning a bike, there are entire subcultures built around bike usage. Once I looked at it that way, it was relatively straightforward to write 100 different stories about cycling. I actually wrote a few spare, so I could choose the best ones!

Are the stories in ‘Memoirs of a Madcap Cyclist’ all personal? Or do people you know encourage you to write about their experiences too?

Most of the stories are from my own experience, a few are based on research (such as “International Cyclist”, “Birdman” and “Boffins on Bikes”), and some are based on conversations with fellow cyclists. When I cycle round to meet people, sometimes they see the cycle helmet and we get talking about crazy stuff that happens on bikes, or people see me out on my bike and comment when they see me next. Everyone has stories about cycling, whether they cycle themselves or not. I've had a few readers tell me they know some of the stories didn't happen to me, but the stories they think are true sometimes aren't, and the ones they think are fabricated are quite often true. The mark of a good story is that people can't tell fact from fiction, and the book does that very well!

Is the 100 words per story a blessing or a challenge?

Oddly, it's both! It's a good discipline, keeping to such a small and exact word count. Every word has to bring something to the story, and I've used Bold, Italics, block capitals and bullet points to make points more succinctly. It all adds up to a lovely little book of bite-size stories, great for reading on the go in snatched moments. The first few stories are the hardest to get to the correct word count, but once I get into the swing of things, 100 words becomes easier. It's a lovely length to grab readers, and leaves them wanting to know more about the person under the cycle helmet.

You have a cycling family, what (in your own view) is stopping more families in Greater Manchester cycling every day?

The lovely Mancunian weather certainly takes some getting used to! Cycling in the rain is off-putting for less confident cyclists, but once you've experienced the sheer joy of ploughing through an enormous puddle, or taken the kids out bramble-picking on their bikes, there's nothing quite like it.

I'd like to see more segregated cycle lanes and clearer markings for shared-use footpaths, so everyone knows where they're supposed to be. Cycling with families is most enjoyable when it's just bikes, and you're not having to negotiate cars, dogs and pedestrians. I'd like more joined up cycle routes too, at the moment there are odd stretches that go along the pavement then suddenly drop onto the road, which is baffling for all road users.

Most of all, I'd like to encourage parents to get out there and cycle! It's a great example to set children, and children who grow up cycling are more likely to cycle safely as adults. The more cyclists we have on the roads, the better.

Cycling Proficiency

The Cub Scouts did their cycling proficiency badge.

Forty little bikes, with forty little cyclists, all lined up along the roadside.

The Cub Pack leader talked them through the basics and checked the bikes, forty little brake levers, forty little saddles.

Forty little heads, clad in forty bright helmets, nodded that they were ready, and then set off.

Forty little bikes followed one big bike, looking for all the world like a mother duck with a trail of bobbing ducklings.

Somehow, he kept them in check, forty bikes returned safely.

Forty cycling proficiency badges awarded.

Forty Cubs cycled home triumphant.

Memoirs of a Madcap Cyclist, published by Success Stories, retails at £6.99. It can be purchased from the Bike Barn at Sale Water Park, Chorlton Book Shop or online at www.drabblediaries.com

Rush Hour

'Rush Hour' is a misnomer.

It's the time when car drivers travel their slowest.

Conversely, it's one of few times cyclists are the fastest things on the road.

Where the cycle lanes are clear, rush hour is a time of triumph for cyclists.

Some car drivers begrudge us even this small victory, keeping their sluggish vehicles as far left as possible, so their wing mirrors encroach on the cycle lane.

Some, impatient to edge in from side roads, straddle the cycle lane.

If even half of the frustrated motorists swapped to cycling, rush hour would be more pleasant for everyone.

Hallway Origami

We are a multi-bike household, so whoever gets home first gets the prime bike spot in the hallway.

Whoever gets in last, however, has a tougher time of it.

There is an optimal arrangement of bicycles; a truly elegant solution to the hallway bicycle storage problem.

I know this because I found it once when I arrived home, tired, after a long day.

Somehow, as I wedged my bike into the hallway disaster zone, the bikes arranged themselves, like a complicated origami structure, into perfect alignment.

I walked unhindered past the nested bicycles, wishing I knew how I'd done it.

How to Open a Community Bike Hub in Two Weeks, on a Fiver

This Summer a new all singing and all dancing (provided by Spokes) bike hub opened in Platt Fields Park, Anna Smith tells us more about its opening.

We had been eagerly awaiting permission to begin the new bike project in Platt Fields Park for some time, so when we were finally given the green light two weeks before opening – of course we leapt ahead of ourselves and decided that we'd open up the shutters for bicycle-busy splendour before the month was out. At the time of making this decision, the space was nowhere near ready for the public eye. Sitting lonely and solitary for the last few years meant that it was well overdue some care and attention.

So, here's how we opened up our new community bike project in under two weeks. And yes, we had a fiver in the pot to do it with as well.

1. Recruit our ace team – of mechanics, artists, bike dancers, students, cargo bike builders & coffee suppliers, software engineers & all round bike enthusiasts

2. Beg, borrow & steal everyone's time away – an hour at a time. "Who's got a bike trailer available later to shift some stuff" – a common question.

3. Gut the Boathouse, be ruthless.

4. Paint the Boathouse, try not to get carried away with colour.

5. Tap into the tool supply (thank you Manchester Student Homes)

6. Make a dodgy rushed logo (better one coming soon, we promise)

7. Make a quick website (more interactive one coming soon, we promise)

8. Print off some dodgy flyers, photocopy them & cut them out with scissors.

9. Work weeks of 14 hour days

10. Figure out what everyone's skills are and get them to work them into the space.

11. OPEN !!

We had a super great launch day; the shutters opened at 1pm & stayed that way well into the evening.

There was an open Tool Club running throughout the day, with our pro mechanics [including the awesome Revolve MCR] on-hand to help anyone in need. The workshop was soon buzzing with all sorts of mechanical magic; the interior space taking on the form of a circular bike fixing hub with numerous stands & poorly bikes getting healed.

We were also running free bike fixing for people that wanted to chill outside on the deck chairs with delicious coffee-from-the-trike brought to you by Coffee Cranks. A fully luring bike jumble kept the public topped up with bargain bike goodies throughout the scorching afternoon and when people started overheating it was time to play "Soak the Cyclist".

Manchester Bike Hire who will be renting out hire bikes from The Hub were also there offering lucky pedallers a free spin on the cruising beauties of bikes.

And when the sun turned orange it was time to crank in the pedal powered tunes, fire up the veggie paella and welcome Critical Mass riders to the park for a twilight bike party.

There will be plenty more full days like this one – but for now, check out our current timetable for opening hours & what's going on at <http://plattfieldsbikehub.org.uk/>



WELCOME
TO PLATT FIELDS BIKE
HUB : A SPACE TO HOST
VARIOUS COMMUNITY
FOCUSSED BICYCLE
PROJECTS

First edition
timetable

EVERY MONDAY 6-8 : 'Unicycle'
THE SPOKES
OPEN SESSION

**EVERY WEDS, FRI,
SAT 10-4 :**
FIX MY RIDE
BIKE HIRE
BICYCLE AMBULANCE
4-6 :
OPEN TOOL CLUB

Unicycle!
**STUDENT
FRIENDLY
WEDNESDAYS**
10% OFF

MON - FRI 10-4
COFFEE CRANKS CO-OP

Free ROAD TRAINING

**GET IN
TOUCH:**

MORE INFO →

@plattfieldbikes
PFBH.ORG.UK
#plattfieldsBH

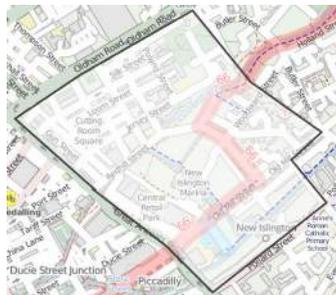
Cyclescape

<http://gmcc.cyclescape.org/>

Cyclescape is an almost one-stop-shop online toolkit for cycling campaigning which holds a lot of potential for GMCC and more generally UK cycle campaigning.

It is open to anyone to join, whether a member of an area specific campaign or not, and most information can be viewed by anyone online too. However it also allows some discussions and housekeeping for a campaign to be conducted on a member's only basis. You can join the GMCC group by using the above link.

Once you have signed up to Cyclescape and joined as a GMCC member you should set up the areas that interest you by setting up **locations**. You can select exact places (such as your work), routes, or more general areas. When a new issue is posted in this area you'll then find out about it. **Issues** are area specific, but multiple discussions about one issue can take place, you can also add pictures to illustrate the problem, or share consultation files for example.



At first the interface takes a little bit of getting used to but after you log your first 'Issue' you get the hang of it. Cyclescape offers a great deal of potential to GMCC, but only if people want and do use it, so join today and have a look around.

Interview

In June 2014 GMCC's membership secretary Joanna Long was featured in an ITV programme entitled 'Road Rage Britain, Caught on Camera'. The main premise of the programme was to exhibit examples of road rage and to do an experiment with a taxi driver and cycle courier swapping places in London and in Manchester a cyclist and White Van Man.

Here she talks to Neil Fergusson about her experience of being in the media spotlight.

Being on television isn't really a common thing, how an earth did this happen?

How did they find you?

A friend heard on Twitter that ITV were looking for a woman who rides a bike to appear on this programme. It was a friend in GMCC and we thought this could be quite a good opportunity for us to get a sensible message about cycling out.

We figured that it was pretty risky because you don't know how they're going to cut it, what their [the production company] agenda is. They tell you a certain amount about what the programme is going to be, but it could end up being a bit different. It was a lot more sensationalist than I had been led to believe at the beginning.

But we felt like it was a risk worth taking, if we didn't do it then who knows who they would have found and then we would have lost an opportunity to get some good messages about cycling out. Even if we could just get one or two good messages into this programme we felt that would be quite a good thing. And it was going to be on ITV1! When do you get to speak to that many motorists at once?



How was the experience of being filmed?

What did it entail?

It was over three days, but it was only a few hours every day. I didn't meet the white van man until the last day, we both did all our stuff separately.

So the first bit was an interview piece about my experiences. They wanted to know about near misses, if I had fallen off, road rage incidents that I had, stuff like that. Then I rode my bike around Chorlton with them filming me from a car, which was pretty funny because obviously they had to drive pretty slowly and some other drivers were getting pretty angry with them. They obviously didn't know much about cycling because when I needed to turn right they didn't move out of the way and actually pulled up alongside me in the ASL so I had to yell at them to get out of the ASL.

The next day they came back and fitted a load of cameras to my bike, and sent me out to ride around by myself. I don't usually ride with any cameras at all so I noticed a big difference in how drivers behaved. There was one guy who overtook me as we were both turning right and then he kind of stopped halfway through because he saw all these cameras and didn't really know what to do. I thought 'you've only paused because you've seen these cameras and you're wondering if you're going to get busted'. It really irritated me that people respected cameras but they don't respect a human being.

And then the next day I got to drive a white van around the city!

Had you driven vans before?

I have, and I enjoy driving vans, they're awesome because you get treated like royalty. It is amazing. I am such a good driver when I'm in a white van because people give you loads of space, they are really polite, they let you out. It's like you've got magical powers.

Driving the white van, it was like I was in a parallel universe. Sometimes you are on your bike and it's like there's a full moon and there's just an ignorant fool every five minutes. Then other days it's perfectly fine. But as soon as I went out in the van, everyone was just angelic! I turned into a little narrow street and everyone in this queue of traffic started pulling over so I could get through. It's just ridiculous the submissiveness to the white van.

The third part of the filming was meeting up with the van driver and having a chat with him but after that I got to cycle along with a motorcycle camera crew. Which basically felt like I was Lizzie Armitstead in a road race. Amazing! There was me on my upright Dutch bike, and had this camera in my face. That was my favourite part of the filming.

At the end you meet the white van man who has been cycling for just a few hours around Manchester to talk about your experiences.

Yeah. He was a whingebag, a total whingebag. He kept going on about, how you are breathing in all this pollution, feeling every bump in the road, how it was raining and that he swallowed a fly. What a wuss. Come on. I couldn't really do much with him.

So there wasn't really any common ground or mutual respect achieved from your experiences?

I think he felt vulnerable when cycling. He did say that he'd maybe remember that. But then the next minute he was making jokes about blowing smoke in my face if he saw me on the roads. As he started talking about being in his van again it's like he completely forgot about that entire cycling experience. I don't think he could remember that vulnerability when he was in the van and how they are connected. He was more concerned about it being warm, dry and having his own music on. I don't hold out much hope that he learned a whole lot.



So that was the filming and you're now at the stage when there's no more you can do. You don't have a media team, you get no say in the edit of the programme. Did you get to see it before it was broadcast nationally?

Not really. They sent me a copy of the trailer and a teaser in advance and I thought it looked like a really awful kind of shock-doc or something. I also saw a few clips because we did some breakfast TV publicity, which the production company asked me to do.

I was scared about it but I felt that if they've completely twisted my words in the programme then this is my chance to say something unedited. It was good actually, we were on BBC Breakfast then Granada Reports in the evening. BBC Breakfast was good: we had a long slot and the van driver wasn't really awake, so I could run the show. Granada reports was less good: the van driver had woken up and was more than happy to give them the sensationalist angle they were looking for. I didn't really get a look-in.

When the programme aired in the evening, I was quite glad that a whole bunch of us from GMCC went to the pub and watched it because it diluted the whole mortifying experience of being on TV. It was nice to have friends around and people teasing me about it because if I had been sitting at home watching it by myself I probably would have been getting very anxious.

What was the tone of the programme, and how do you feel that you came across? You spoke before about your aims of being on the programme, trying to hopefully have a little bit of influence, were your expectations met?

There were a lot of clips from YouTube, more than I was expecting, it was most of the programme and felt like there was a lot less space for any of us really to kind of say anything. Immediately it seemed pretty trashy, audience-baiting TV, focused on the motorist versus cyclist thing. But the more I thought about it afterwards, I felt that they had actually snuck in some more thoughtful bits. The taxi driver said some interesting things and I think that the cycle courier in London said some pretty fun things and was quite honest. Nobody except the white van driver came across as a total idiot. I think I came across as quite boring, because I was trying not to say anything nasty about anyone. I wanted to help people understand more about what it's like to ride a bike in a city. I wasn't great TV. I don't think I was in it as much as the other people, but the bits that were in I was quite pleased about.

Also, I think just seeing a woman in regular clothes riding around on a bike, that's a good message isn't it?

Definitely. Do you think, that you would have been in it more if you had said more antagonising things?

Yeah. I think I would have been. I haven't done like a forensic analysis of how long I was in it but I'm guessing it wasn't that much. Maybe only a few minutes.

I felt like it was a pretty fair programme actually, for what it was, for what it could have been. It could have been quite a lot worse.

The number of people who I know who've watched it or people who have rung up my parents and said "I've seen your daughter on television", these are people who would never read any of the cycle campaigning literature that we do. It's easy to get into a bubble with cycle campaigning and think that with Chris Boardman visiting Parliament and so on that people are paying attention to cycling. They're not. Most people are completely oblivious so I think we managed to reach quite a big and skeptical audience. I don't know how many people watched the programme—I know it was trending on Twitter that evening so I'm guessing a few million—if even 1% of those people watched it and thought differently about cyclists then that would be a good thing, wouldn't it?

As a cyclist would you recommend being featured on a TV programme? Or would you recommend it with caution or advice?

With caution. I had quite a lot of conversations with the producers because I didn't want to be part of a sensationalist programme. But I think with TV people you should always take whatever they say and multiply it by ten.

Also what seems interesting to us as cycle campaigners is not what an ITV audience wants. You can't expect it to be a lecture on why cycling's great and why motorists should love us. It's not cycling propaganda, unfortunately, and actually if it was then the people we need to watch it would switch off.

It was a fun experience but I had to do a lot of work for it. I had to prepare quite carefully what I wanted to say and what my 'messages' were. You can't just try and say nice things about cycling, you've got to be able to handle questions where they are trying to push you off in one direction.

I think if you prepare and you take it seriously then I don't think there is anything to be afraid of and I think it is a good thing to do to reach out to new, new audiences and get the message out. I don't know if I'd do it again anytime soon, though – it's bloody time consuming!

**space
for
cycling**

**RIDE AT LABOUR
CONFERENCE
22.09.14 • 6:00PM**

Details online at:
www.gmcc.org.uk/s4c

 @GMcycling

 /GMCycling