

re:cycling in Levenshulme



Ride Manchester is a new cycling project based in the south of the city. Set up by cycling enthusiasts who "believe that cycling can be beneficial in many areas of life: not only is cycling the best way to get around our busy city, but it is healthy, environmentally friendly, empowering, cheap – and most importantly – FUN." They aim to improve the lives of Mancunians using the bicycle as the tool. If they get enough funding they hope to provide free bikes to marginalised groups in the future. For now, they are providing cheap bikes to the people of Manchester, and offering training to give them the skills to maintain them. They say have not set themselves up as a commercial concern so that they can concentrate on the sharing of skills and resources, and giving impartial advice and information. . They hope to pay themselves a wage, but no more. Extra profits are to be used to pay bills, if they make surpluses they'll be put toward additional necessities or exiting new projects.

They want people to donate time in the workshop, bicycles or even hard cash. They are asking for and will collect unwanted or unused or discarded bicycles or parts, recycle them in their workshop and then either sell them (very cheaply) or give them to people as part of their "earn-a-bike" scheme, where they are proposing to let workshop volunteers earn themselves a bike in return for a certain time contribution to the rebuilding of the bikes. They also run workshops and "cycle surgeries" in youth centres. "Ride Manchester wants to encourage transport of the sustainable sort, and we want to see more people riding bikes!" say adam and huw
So go forage in that cupboard/basement/garage and get in touch with them: e-mail : mail@ridemanchester.org.uk, phone: 0161 249 0332, or drop round to The Annexe, 2b Buckhurst Rd, Levenshulme, Manchester, M19 2DS. Their website is www.ridemanchester.org.uk

£10,000 Community Network cycling project vanishes without report

In 2004 the Transport Thematic Partnership, part of Manchester's Community Strategy, agreed to GMCC's proposal for a project to study the maintenance of the City's on-road cycling provision such as bike lanes and advanced stop lines. The proposal was allocated a budget of £10,000. GMCC's Dick Venes held some promising meetings with a Council officer and elicited views from our members regarding the scope of the project. We were disappointed at the limited remit of the project - to survey the condition of these facilities rather than actually do some work on them. However, we looked forward to a report that would identify weaknesses in the Council's existing maintenance sched-

ule and result in an improved service in the future.

The project was due to be finished by the end of the financial year, 31 March 2005. So far, despite repeated enquiries, no report or information about its results have been forthcoming from Council officers or Community Network representatives. Was the money actually spent on this project? If so, why the delay in publishing the results? If not, where did the money go? Councillors have been contacted in an attempt to get answers to these questions. Volunteers and community groups need assurances that their involvement with such statutory-led partnerships is meaningful rather than tokenistic.

numbercrunching!

June saw the release of the latest Transport Statistics from the Department for Transport (link below), there was good news and bad news:

"Pedal cyclist casualties were 2% lower than in 2003 at 16,648. There were 2,174 seriously injured casualties, 5% less than in 2003. The number of pedal cyclists killed went up by 18% from 114 to 134." This rise in death rates is disturbing, but just so that you can put it into perspective: "• There were 280,840 reported casualties on roads in Great Britain in 2004, 3% less than in 2003. 3,221 people were killed, 8% less than in 2003. 31,130 were seriously injured (down 8% on 2003) and 246,489 were slightly injured (down 3% on 2003)."

These figures prompted us to look in more depth at the figures available, compared to the other modes of transport, the average number of deaths per year over the last 10 years per billion kms travelled was 41 for cycling making it safer than walking (54) or

motorcycling (113) but public transport was less than 1, and travel by car was only 3. We thought these figures looked too bleak so went searching for statistics for comparative amounts of cycling to see how the fatalities relate to usage. But trying to decipher these was a challenge and depends on how you assess it; by distance or number of journeys. By distance the picture is depressing; in 1952 11% of passenger kilometres were travelled by bicycle, that dropped steadily until it reached its present of 1% - which it reached in 1967! By number of journeys the picture is slightly better although still shows a 10% drop over the last 10 years - I think.

This all started to get a little depressing at this point and I gave up less my inability to interpret accurately painted an unnecessarily bad picture of the current state of affairs. If anyone else wants to try and have a go my source was firstly Sheffield's www.pedalpushers.org.uk then www.dft.gov.uk and follow the links for transport statistics.



Is GMCC a (Public) Liability?

Recent attempts to raise our profile had mixed results. We shared a stall with the Friends of the Fallowfield Loop in the Green Fair at the Garden of Delights in Platt Fields, Rusholme, Manchester. This two day event in early June attracted thousands of people. Members covered our stall for the whole weekend. It was well worth the effort as we were inundated with enquiring visitors.

Later in the month we were due to have another information stall at the Bike Show in St Ann's Square, part of Manchester Bike Week. Three days before the event, a City Council officer enquired if we had public liability insurance – their requirement for participating in the Show. When the answer was negative MCC offered to pay the annual premium of £100 on GMCC's behalf - in recognition of our input to Bike Week. GMCC declined, partly because the acting Honorary Secretary, a Manchester Council Tax payer, didn't want public money spent on GMCC. Accepting such a gift could reduce our freedom to criticise the Council - we might feel uneasy about biting the hand that feeds us.



Bearing in mind the innocuous nature of our stall we believe the insurance company was exploiting the Council and GMCC. How much damage can you do with a membership leaflet? The more fanciful risk assessor might imagine a scenario where member Dave Mott's pipe sets fire to the stall, a strong wind fans the flames to the Royal Exchange and incinerates central Manchester. And 2005 is the Year of the Volunteer.

In retrospect, we were probably covered under the National Bike Week insurance. The whole affair reflects our growing compensation culture and public authorities' complicity in it. All very sad, considering how GMCC had participated significantly in the organisation and execution of Manchester Bike Week.



Bikes, buses, trains & trams

Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (GMPTE) and some local authorities have tried cycle locker parking schemes at bus and rail stations with mixed results. Bolton Council installed nice red lockers at Bolton, Lostock and a couple of other stations. Whenever I visit Bolton on business I note the use of the station bike parking facilities. The Sheffield stands are usually occupied but the lockers appear empty - not helped by the fading illegible signs advertising the service.

Now comes news of a new cycle parking initiative - the **Stockport Bike Locker Users Club (BLUC)**. This scheme offers members access to any BLUC locker via a special key. This is attractive for casual cyclists or those likely to use more than one

location. BLUC lockers are located in the town centre, main bus station and the following rail stations in the borough: Stockport, Bramhall, Bredbury, Cheadle Hulme, Hazel Grove, Heald Green, Heaton Chapel, Marple, Reddish North, Romiley and Rose Hill. Membership is for two years and costs £10. You must complete a short application form with proof of address.

For more information contact Stockport's cycling officer: don.naylor@stockport.gov.uk 0161 474 4593

If successful the scheme may be extended to other areas in the conurbation.

Pothole is particularly interested to hear the experiences of any GMCC member who joins the Stockport BLUC.

Cycle hire in Tatton Park

A West Midlands enterprise called cyclelifehireshop which has set up a number of facilities for hiring bikes has extended its franchise to Tatton Park which offers recreational routes linking with the Cheshire Cycleway. Bikes, supplied by Raleigh, are on hire for all ages, genders and sizes, and you can hire tandems too. Children can ride a bike-buddy or be chauffeured in a buggy. The hire fee is £4 per hour per bike and for £12 you can hire a bike for the day. Proof of identity such as a driving licence [!], credit card or even your car keys [sic!] is needed. However, we live in an imperfect world and if people have to drive to reach the saddle so be it. Many, if not most of the hirers so far, have been opportunists and the Park

offers a gentle and pleasurable environment to introduce people, especially families to the benefits of cycling. The Transpennine Trail affords a largely traffic-free route from South Manchester to Dunham Park from which point there are a network of lanes to reach Tatton. Alternatively the train can be caught at either Piccadilly, Stockport or Altrincham and takes you to Knutsford where the southern entrance to the Park is located. Sadly, as GMCC members are all too aware, the Metro is barred to bikes. GMCC member, Paul Thomson, has been helping to get the scheme started and sees the facility as an opportunity to promote the National Cycle network, cycling as a recreation and possibly the recruitment of cycle campaigners.

Velodrome cuts bike parking (but invites you in instead)

On a recent visit to the Manchester Velodrome I noticed that the bike parking stands at the competitors' entrance had been removed. On enquiry at the reception desk, I was told I could bring my bike inside or use the cycle parking spaces at the front of the building, but these are 300 metres away from the competitors' entrance. Admittedly the previous bike stands were not well used as many participants bring special models with

them in cars. These bikes are now rarely a mode of transport to get to the Velodrome only a piece of sports equipment.

P.S. I was attending the Velodrome for a Track Taster session. Both exhilarating and scary, I survived without falling off. I would recommend the experience to other GMCC members. To book phone 0161 223 2244 or check out their website: www.manchestervelodrome.com

GMCC gets dressed up for winter

The nights are starting to draw in, too many motorists still don't seem able to spot cyclists, and we need to get a few choice messages out to them. So GMCC is getting some high visibility waistcoats made. These will be in a 'gilet' style - a jacket without arms. It will have GMCC's logo on the front and a panel on the back with a slogan on.

This will be removable exposing a mesh back panel for when you are cycling with a rucksack and don't want to get too hot and bothered or when it's just too hot next year. The jacket will come with a tie with velcro ends so that the panel can then be put over your rucksack making sure you and slogan still get to be highly visible and it'll even keep your bag dry as the material will be water resistant breathable as well as fluorescent and orange. There will also be 1 inch wide

reflective stripes front back AND sides to help avoid those little junction moments we all know only too well .

We will be selling them for what they cost us which because they are a more complicated product than the traditional vest will be £20, they will be available in small, medium, large and extra large. We can't afford to get extra small at this stage but will do once we have seen which sizes are selling well and we have recouped some of the initial investment. So let us know if you want one. Also we'd like to hear from you if you have any idea about slogans, the advantage of the back panel being removable is that we can change the slogans and have new pieces made up so we should be able to use more than one idea.

contact us at pothole@gmcc.org.uk

Whatever happened to the Greater Manchester Cycle Parking Standards?

In spring 2003 GMCC was consulted on the Draft (Cycle) Parking Standards for Greater Manchester. These are now incorporated in the Local Transport Plan. Yet cyclists can still find new public and commercial developments with inadequate or poor quality cycle parking. When challenged, planners reply that the designs of these developments were approved long before the current standards were in place. So how long will we have to wait to see the end of wheel grabbers and other such evil contraptions?

Last year anorak Vincent Walsh pedalled round the (football) grounds of Greater Manchester assessing their cycle-friendliness. Now shopaholic Dick Venes invites Pothole readers to audit the cycle parking where they indulge in retail therapy.

Unicorn Grocery in Chorlton, Manchester is a beacon of good practice with its excellent bike parking provision. At other supermarkets provision varies widely. GMCC has objected to new supermarket developments, such as the new Tesco on the Manchester/Stockport border, on the grounds that there is insufficient bike parking for both staff and shoppers.

Even where supermarkets install cycle parking, it is often of the type which no sensible cyclist would use, such as the wheelbenders at Wal-Mart, Sport City Manchester (see photo)

A GMCC member has suggested we should lobby retailers for better facilities. So here's your opportunity to participate in campaigning. Over the next few months we request GMCC members informally survey supermarkets or big box stores such as Band Q when they visit, either by bike or car. Please collect the following information:

Name of supermarket,
Address,
Date & time of visit,
Number of shoppers bike parking places,
Number of bikes on them,
Type of parking space:
Sheffield stands/ wheel benders/ other (please specify)
Number of bikes locked up to something else in vicinity.

Email the results to secretary@gmcc.org.uk or send them to:

GMCC, c/o 68/70 Dickenson Road, Manchester M14 5HF
Fax: 0161 257 3102

We will then celebrate cycle-friendly shops and write to those with inadequate facilities, suggesting improvements. If the poor providers prove uncooperative in supporting their cycling customers we will name and shame them. An excellent weapon in the battle for better bike parking is the Sustrans/CTC Information Sheet FF37 **Cycle Parking** (Phone 0845 1130065 for copies). Also useful is the Product Sheet on Sheffield Stands available from manufacturers K Rackham & Son (Tel 01603 485038).



compare and contrast....unicorn grocery in chorlton vs walmart in 'new' east manchester

On Your Bike- with a little help from the National Health(sic)

In the summer of 2004 Vincent Walsh's life changed in two ways: he became the father of twin girls and he rejoined the NHS. His employer, Central Manchester Primary Care Trust generously offered him adoption leave – but nowhere to securely park his bike. He sought solace and solidarity amongst kindred spirits and started a BUG (Bicycle User Group).

More people visit their GP each year than attend hospital. Yet local hospitals rather than local doctors are leading the way in encouraging cycling. In 2003 NHS Hospital Trusts in Rochdale, Oldham and Manchester received grants from the Cycling Projects Fund to provide bike parking. No Greater Manchester health centres or surgeries benefited from this national initiative.

The potential of cycling is recognised by the Directors of Public Health for Greater Manchester in their submission to the 2006 - 2011 Local Transport Plan, "Promoting walking and cycling as the main transport mode for journeys less than five miles would be the most effective measure in reducing obesity, heart disease, osteoporosis and depression."

In Greater Manchester 14 Primary Care Trusts have the principal responsibility for the health of local populations. The Joint Health Unit brings together the City Council and the three Manchester PCTs with a remit that includes Sustainable Transport - and the Promotion of Cycling. More cycling would not only prevent illness but relieve stressed NHS managers who admit they cannot provide enough car parking for staff and patients.

During the summer of 2004 Manchester Royal Infirmary tried unsuccessfully to borrow parts of Platt Fields and Whitworth Park to accommodate its motorising staff. Now the Hospital Trust has appointed a Travel Plan Co-ordinator, Ian Goodwin to devise more creative alternatives to car travel. These include equitable charging for parking, incentives to car share, discounted deals with public transport operators and better facilities for cyclists.

As an affordable mode of transport a bike can meet some of the needs of households who do not have access to a car (over 30 per cent in Central Manchester). Our city is flat - and not as wet as rumoured.

Good quality parking is critical in supporting cycling. Manchester hospitals are leading the way – witness the sheltered racks at the main entrance to MRI. Current provision at Central Manchester PCT sites is patchy. Brunswick Health Centre offers Sheffield Stands. Trust HQ Mauldeth House has a rusty insecure frame. One of the busiest Health Centres at Rusholme has no cycle parking - three of its GPs store their bikes in their consulting rooms. Practice Director Pat Lockton is negotiating with the PCT to provide proper bike storage, "Currently, bikes are kept in corridors and cupboards because no one is prepared to leave them outside. "

New PCT staff visit the HQ at Mauldeth House to be inducted. Those who drive may squeeze into the official car park or take advantage of the unofficial agreement to park next door in Chorlton High School. Only open in September 2004, its 130-space car park is already overflowing on the surrounding verges.

David McGarrigan, NHS Agency Facilities Manager is charged with bringing order to the chaos that is PCT car parking, "We conducted a travel survey at HQ – over 100 workers defined themselves as essential car users who have to fit into our 70 spaces. Staff currently pay nothing to use the car park but each space costs the PCT £250 per year (a fee included in the office rent)." Mauldeth House cyclists would be easier and cheaper to please - a Sheffield Stand accommodates two bikes safely for a one-off cost of £70.

The PCT is in negotiations with Chorlton High to build a 50-place overflow car park. Ironically the site is adjacent to the Fallowfield Loop which provides off-road cycling across South Manchester. However it is not certain the PCT would get permission for a new car park. Plan-



ning authorities such as Manchester Council insist that organisations have Travel Plans in place before they give approval to building developments that include parking spaces. Mr McGarrigan admitted that progress has been slow, "There is no date to deliver a Travel Plan which could cover all three PCTs. We will have to hire a consultant to help." A complicating factor is that the city's PCTs are moving towards a merger. Fewer staff should mean fewer car parks. Other local employers including Wythenshawe Hospital and Manchester Airport already have Travel Plans in place with investment in attractive secure facilities for their cycling staff and visitors.

Nationally, exercise is rising up the political agenda with the publication in November 2004 of the White Paper *Choosing Health – Making Healthy Choices Easier*. Public Health staff in Central Manchester are leading by example, Val Armstrong, Health & Partnerships manager and Sandra Stronach, Local Area Group manager are regular cyclists. Community Health Educa-

tor Project Co-ordinator Vincent Walsh is a new member of the team," Although based at St Thomas Centre in Ardwick occasionally I cycle across to Chorlton. The journey takes me 20 minutes crossing Whitworth and Alexandra Parks en route – delightful and as quick as a car." Val and Vincent are founder members of the Bicycle User Group.

The April meeting of the BUG was addressed by Gloria Gabriel, Travel Plan Co-ordinator for Christie's Hospital. Gloria described her plans to promote cycling through better facilities and interest-free loans to purchase bikes. Her travel survey showed that 58 per cent of the 2000 Christies staff live within four miles of the hospital. Currently only 5 per cent of them cycle to work but a third would consider cycling. Gloria intends to double this figure over a 5 year period.

On 21 June, the Summer Solstice, the Bicycle User Group was not at Stonehenge but out on their bikes for a social ride. PCT

Service



staff, both beginners and experienced cyclists shared a summer evening's pedal along the Fallowfield Loop from Chorlton to Debdale with final refreshments at the Vale Cottage Inn, Gorton. In early August the BUG enjoyed another outing, this time along the Trans Penine Trail, around Chorlton Water Park, across Wythenshawe Park and back down the Mersey to sup at Jackson's Boat.

are being urged to do more for cycling. BUG priorities include Sheffield Cycle Stands at health centres, staff lockers and showers. More staff would use their bike at work if reimbursed higher than the national minimum of 6.2 pence per mile. A positive move by Central Manchester PCT would be a determination to emulate their enlightened counterparts in Salford - who offer 20 pence.

On Friday 30 September the Bicycle User Group will promote the benefits and joys of cycling to PCT staff and residents of Central Manchester at a Health Fair in the Armitage Centre in Fallowfield. The results of the audit of PCT bike parking will be available plus the chance for potential cyclists to sign up for a buddy/mentoring scheme with more confident riders. There will be competitions with points to be won..... and points mean prizes. This public event coincides with the Annual General Meeting of the Primary Care Trust attended by the Board who

Information about Central Manchester Bicycle User Group can be accessed via the PCT website:
www.centralmanchesterpct.nhs.uk



Garden of Delights... not Green enough

In early June Platt Fields, Manchester was transformed into a Garden of Delights by Manchester International Arts – the team responsible for the Streets Ahead festivals. The event included a Green Fair organised by the Environment Network for Manchester. In previous years rogue cyclists have caused problems for visitors therefore no bikes were allowed into the park during the GoD weekend. However those who entered into the green spirit of the occasion and arrived by bike had nowhere adequate to park. Appeals from GMCC's Chris Trueblood to GoD to provide temporary barriers in a secure area proved fruitless. On the day we had to chain our bikes to some weed infested railings. After three very successful years the Garden of Delights is unlikely to be repeated due to funding problems. If it is revived we hope a more positive approach will be taken to cycling visitors. We do have an ally - MIA co-partner is FotFL member Anne Tucker.



Hot Debate about Coolness of Helmets

The British Medical Association at its Annual Representative Meeting in June reversed its previous position and voted for compulsory helmets for cyclists of all ages. Dr Stephen Watkins, Director of Public Health in Stockport, chair of the BMA's Transport and Health Working Group and member of the GMPTE Health and Transport Forum spoke against compulsion, "The BMA Board of Science's own calculations indicate that, if we could promote cycling as the main mode of transport for journeys under five miles, thousands of lives would be saved by reducing heart disease. This contrasts with just a handful of deaths which might be saved by cycle helmets."

A letter written by Vincent Walsh, published in the Manchester Evening News on 28 July (extract below) sparked a lively email debate in the GMCC Chat Room.

"Dear Editor

...Attempts to get more of our increasingly obese children to cycle are sure to be undermined by forcing them to wear helmets. Strange that the fuel firm Jet wants more children to cycle at all. It is about as logical to force young cyclists into helmets as to insist they wear them before climbing trees, walking alongside a busy road or sitting in the back of a car. Countries like Australia which have introduced compulsory helmets have seen a 40 per cent fall in cycling with the threat of rising levels of heart disease. Other nations, such as the Netherlands, realise the folly of such legislation. They have a greater critical mass of cyclists of all ages, few wearing helmets and less prone to injuries. The only people to benefit from compulsory cycling helmets will be manufacturers and underworked cardiac surgeons."

Paul D'Ambra wrote:

Can someone give me the run down on why helmets are bad? I've been knocked off twice in two years. The first time the only thought going through my head was, "Bugger I'm not wearing a helmet".

Charlotte Bathurst wrote:

I too am interested in knowing more about why helmets are perceived to give cycling a negative image. I read recently that encouraging people to wear helmets actually discouraged

them from taking up cycling. When I go in a car I wear a seat belt, when I go snowboarding I wear wrist guards and a helmet, when I go roller-blading I wear knee and wrist pads, when I go sailing I wear a buoyancy aid, and when I go cycling I wear a helmet. In fact, it actually feels wrong and unnatural to me if I do any of the above activities without the protective clothing mentioned.

Not sure if that is because I am an over cautious person naturally (sarcastic comment given my choice of hobbies) or because the time I snowboarded without wristguards I broke my wrist, and the time I got knocked off my bike when I wasn't wearing a helmet I got concussion and a very attractive scar on my head. I have encouraged an extra 8 people in my office to commute to work by bike, and everyone single one of them wore a helmet from the start without me even needing to suggest it, and it certainly hasn't discouraged them.

Neil Derbyshire wrote

I actually think you make the point against mandatory wearing of helmets very well, even if you do it unwittingly. To compare cycling to snowboarding, roller-blading or sailing is in my view totally misconceived. Those sports you mention are indeed sports undertaken for fun and recreation. Cycling is on the other hand an everyday activity, we should be seeking to convince people that for all journeys under 2 miles it is the normal way to travel, part of our everyday life. We will not do that if we liken cycling to snowboarding and tell people that to nip a mile to the shops for a loaf you need to gear up to the nines. Certainly wear helmets if that's your preference or if the circumstances dictate its sensible to do so but we will never get cycling numbers up if it is seen as an activity that requires all sorts of safety equipment. The way in which we make cycling safer if to have more of us doing it.

Mike Sutton wrote

It is not that helmets are bad but the issues surrounding enforced helmet usage that are seen as a problem. If a helmet is not seen as cool then the teenager will not ride the bike if forced to wear one or will be criminalised for

riding the bike while not wearing one. This will result in a lowering of cycle usage by the generation that needs to be encouraged to get more exercise not less. There has been no proven correlation between helmet wearing and a reduction in head injuries only in enforced wearing leading to less cycle usage.

The people making the most noise in favour of a change in the law are looking at the issue from a very narrow perspective with more emotion than hard facts. I have come off, over the bars, and cracked a helmet so suspect it saved my skull and contents from some injury; but I do not see that as a base for infringing others liberties and telling all and sundry they should wear one. The only correlation I have seen that shows a reduction in cycling injuries is a reduction in general motor powered traffic and an increase in cycle usage in the Congestion Charge Zone of central London.

I will lay odds that the increase in cycling in London is not matched by an increase in helmet use, not all those new cyclists are wearing helmets. If you want to reduce head injuries in the population as a whole then as a first step all car users should wear helmets.

P.S: Clive Jones writing in Notes & Queries (Guardian 10 August 2005)

Since cycling helmets are not compulsory, they have had to evolve into something people will buy voluntarily, although from a safety point of view, you are probably better off with a decent pair of gloves.

(An antipodean fable: Australia made helmets mandatory in 1990. The number of people cycling dropped dramatically as a result and in Western Australia remains 15-20 per cent down. In 1999 the Road Accident Prevention Research Unit said the number of head injuries to cyclists had dropped by between 11 and 20 per cent - less than the decline in cycling ie the risk per cyclist has increased.

Helmet use has risen to about 40 per cent in London from 1986 but there has been no change in cycle fatalities. Serious head injuries rose in the period of greatest helmet up take source: CTC Press Release, 10-11-2000 - Ed.)

Pub Crawling along on Two Wheels



Despite some misinformation in the Manchester Bike Week publicity and anxiety about public liability over 20 intrepid cyclists made the first GMCC/FotFL cycling pub crawl a memorable event.

Warm weather cultivated thirsty riders – and swarms of flies on the latter part of the route along the Trans Pennine Trail from Stockport. The organiser's choice of pubs proved popular. Most crawlers completed the first few pubs: Lloyds Hotel, Chorlton, Friendship Inn, Fallowfield and the Sidings, Levenshulme. A few declined to continue with the tour of South Reddish industrial estates that brought us our first disappointment, the Nicholsons Arms on Lancashire Hill - a very rundown pub with no real ale. However the welcome and beer quality, including 3 Rivers from Reddish's new micro-brewery, at the Bulls Head in Tiviot Dale compensated.

The next stretch took rather longer than anticipated and ended with another unpleasant experience, the Tatton Arms in Northenden - poor beer, loud music and an underage clientele. By now the crawl was behind schedule as we cycled on through the gathering gloom, weaving around obstacles on the TPT. At last the lights of Jackson's Boat appeared and we were pleased to find a rejuvenated pub with the bonus of Timothy Taylor's. Several participants had arranged to be collected here. The gallant four remaining crawlers carefully picked their way across the meadow in the dark, reaching the Marble Bar in Chorlton in time for last orders.

Comments from most crawlers indicated there is a demand for more such social rides in south Manchester. Therefore we will aim to run a similar event next year and perhaps sooner. Hic.....

piece about the bike trailer

fruit of the loop...



Eddie and Lizzie Caunt are dazzled by the sun and the great taste of Loop blackberries and plums

and other produce...

The Loop and places further afield on the Manchester CycleWay are attracting philosophical scribblers. Have you spotted any of this graffiti or even contributed? Some enterprising person could contrive a tour linking the literary locations. Suggestions please to Manchester Tourist Information – not the Council Cleansing Services.

“In our life alone does nature live ours her wedding garment, ours her shroud”

“Nietzsche not Nature”

“10,000 Pharaohs, 6 billion slaves”

“I suppose before they go to the electric chair I guarantee they read the bible like a bedtime story or a fairy tale”

“Warm and friendly, a certain Rhythm 'n Blues player from the 50's once quoted, 'Nobody on Earth ever mess with me”

“The spirit is the film of knowledge, the brain is the projector”

“Egg, beg, beggin around for a beat up”

taking it a bit far

Congratulations have to go to former England footballer of these parts, Geoff Thomas and his team, one of whom was none other than Robbie from the Bike Doctor for managing to cycle the entire route of the Tour de France in aid of Leukaemia Research in the 21 days the pro-riders take. That's 3,484 kilometres in 3 weeks with only a couple of days off...and in Geoff's case only 6 months after he was told he was in remission from leukemia. The diary on his website is a rivetting read and hopefully it will compel you to

donate - they have raised over £120,000 so far but the target is £200,000 you can read about their exploits as well as donate at www.geoff-thomas.com.



members need minutes, minutes need a secretary

Paul Thomson collects his teaching pension and retires to the Cheshire Plain

GMCC meets on the second Monday of each month at 19 30 hrs at the Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester. We meet throughout the year but the December gathering is usually replaced by a curry night in Rusholme. After many decades service to cycle campaigning our Minutes Secretary, Paul Thomson has left the chalk face and retired, relocating from Sale to Knutsford.

Can you make a small regular commitment to the Campaign?

We need to replace Paul. The duties are vital but not onerous - recording the discussions and decisions at our monthly meetings and e mailing them to attendees and other interested members. Please consider taking over this important role by emailing: secretary@gmcc.org.uk.

Any member who would like to receive a regular copy of the minutes please email: secretary@gmcc.org.uk

caption competition results



Congratulations to **Diane Hutton** who has won a copy of Richards 21st Century Bicycle Book for her description of the Walsh girls' reaction to their first visit to Bicycle Doctor. Her pithy caption: **"This is travelling in style?"** In silver medal position was Mary Chatterjee: Lynda: **"Same old furnishings wherever you go."**

Letter

Dear Pothole
I'm writing to see if you or any readers/GMCC member can give me any advice about safe bicycle storage. I live in a Victorian terraced house, and am getting fed up with squeezing past 3 bicycles each time I go in and out of the house. We have got a basement, but my bike is quite heavy and I struggle to get it up and down the basement stairs. We've also got a small back garden, but I'm concerned about security - the one time I left my bike in the back garden it was gone within a couple of hours (although returned again thanks to some kind neighbours who spotted the thief throwing my bike over the back fence). Have any GMCC members come up with innovative ways of storing the bikes whilst maintaining easy access to them? I'd love to know.

Yours hopefully
Ursula

(I suspect some form of bike hanging arrangement in your hallway would be worth looking at - a google search for 'bike hangers' will return a variety of products, some for more than one bike and even ones with pulleys, if attaching to the wall be aware that some Victorian brickwork has to be treated carefully. e-mail us back for more detailed advice on that if you think that is a good solution. If anyone else has any ideas, pass them back to me and I'll forward them on - Ed)

Leah: **"Why have you got that pink trim?"**

Bronze medal was won by Councillor Paul Shannon:

Lynda: **"This shop is wheelie good."**

Leah: **"Yes, it runs rings around the competition."**

Competition judges Vincent Walsh and Bicycle Doctor Rob Raikes had a tough time assessing all the high quality entries. Thanks to all who participated.

Bike Shops offering discounts to GMCC members

A1 Cycle Spares -

0161 998 2882

414-416 Palatine Road, Northenden

A6 Cycle Warehouse,

0161 248 5400

752-762 Stockport Road, Longsight

Altrincham Bike Shak

0161 929 9355

10 Oakfield Trading Estate, Oakfield Rd

Bardsleys Cycles

0161 432 4936

482 Manchester Road, Stockport

Bicycle Doctor

0161 224 1303

68-70 Dickenson Road, Rusholme

Eddie McGrath Cycles,

0161 748 2733

31 Station Road, Urmston, Trafford

Hirts Cycles

0161 794 2000

60-62 Chorley Road, Swinton, Salford

Ken Foster's Cycle Logic

0161 881 7160

374-6 Barlow Moor Road, Chorlton

Lebram

0161 928 6600

197 Manchester Road, Broadheath

Lebram

0161 969 1818

172-4 Northenden Road, Sale Moor

NW Mountain Bike Centre

0161 428 3311

249 Stockport Road, Cheadle

Skidmores Cycles

0161 624 5912

37 Union Street, Oldham

Withington Cycles

0161 445 3492

26 Burton Road, Withington

Pothole is the newsletter of the Greater Manchester Cycling Campaign. The Campaign meets on the second Monday of each month, 7.30pm at the Friends Meeting House, Mount Street, Manchester, followed by appropriate beverages at the City Arms, Kennedy Street.

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Next Cycle Forum

27 th July, 5.30pm,
Contact Chris Wilkinson,
8 th June, 5.30 for 6pm,
20 th September, 6pm,
Contact Dan
Contact Peter Kidd
20 th July, 6pm,
Contact Chijioke,
Suspended - Council is too posh to pedal!
Contact Damian re new Highway User Group

Date and Venue

Bolton Town Hall
Bury Town Hall
Manchester Town Hall
Oldham Civic Centre
Rochdale Town Hall
Civic Centre, Swinton
Stockport Town Hall
Council Offices, Ashton-u-Lyne