

“Loop the Loop with Choose Freedom”

To mark the 25th Anniversary of the Trans Pennine Trail, the Choose Freedom team at BikeRight! decided to organise a series of bike rides along the Liverpool Loop Line, known locally as “the Ralla”, in partnership with Sustrans. The aim was to show how the Ralla can be used as a transport link.

The Liverpool Loop Line (The Ralla) is a 10 mile path for walkers and cyclists along a disused railway line that runs from Halewood to Aintree. The Ralla forms part of the 350-mile Trans Pennine Trail and is also part of Route 62 of the National Cycle Network. Many cyclists and pedestrians use the Liverpool Loop Line on a daily basis either for their commute to work or for recreation.

The Choose Freedom project has often used the Ralla for regular bike rides and special events such as the Valentine’s Day “Love Your Bike” ride. The route is very popular with beginner riders as it gives groups the opportunity to gain confidence and socialise whilst they ride before learning how to ride on-road.

The rides began on Thursday 10th of July and ran every Thursday up to 28th August. The rides joined together the Choose Freedom teams from the north end and the south end and were a great opportunity for the regular riders to meet each other. On alternate weeks the rides either began from the south end (Garston Urban Village Hall) or the north end (Walton Hall Park Sports Centre) and accessed different attractions in Liverpool.

Cyclists were shown how the Ralla could be used to access attractions such as the National Wildflower Centre and Croxteth Park. The distance of the rides increased each week to train for a challenging 20-mile ride to Southport along the Trans Pennine Trail as the final ride of the series. The full programme of the rides was as follows:-

Thursday 10th July- Garston > Childwall Abbey Pub off Well Lane exit

Thursday 17th July- Walton > Croxteth Park off Three Butt Lane exit

Thursday 24th July- Garston> National Wildflower Centre

Thursday 31st July- Walton> National Wildflower Centre

Thursday 7th August – Garston > East Prescott Road Sainsbury’s

Thursday 14th August – Walton > Childwall Abbey Pub off Well Lane exit

Thursday 21st August – Garston> Croxteth Park off Three Butt Lane

Thursday 28th August- Ride to Southport- Starting BikeRight! Boundary Street

On the final ride to Southport all riders were rewarded with refreshments at Wetherspoons pub in Southport before returning to Liverpool on the train to Sandhills station.

The rides proved to be very popular and attendance was good for each week of the programme with 25 riders participating in the 20 mile ride to Southport to mark the end of the “Loop the Loop” rides. Over the course of the weeks cyclists enjoyed the rides gave positive feedback on Facebook, particularly from the Southport ride.

Sue Than wrote “Had a fab day thank you to all the fab bike leaders too for your patience! That’s another new experience for me too I never would have been confident to even attempt to ride along a canal path”

Katherine Gray wrote “That was the best ride ever. Organisation was top notch! Lots of fun... thanks for the experience”

Audrey O’Sullivan wrote “Thanks to all the bike leaders for another brilliant ride and to BikeRight! for our goodie bag and lunch. Can’t wait for the next ride...can’t believe I rode along the canal, another fear overcome, special thanks to Jenny for the much needed encouragement when we came to those first few bridges :-)”



Figure 1 First ride on the Loop to Childwall



Figure 2 Arriving at Croxteth Park



Figure 3 Bikes outside cafe on exit at East Prescot Road

Southport Ride



Figure 4 The riders ready to set off for Southport



Figure 5 Riding along the canal



Figure 6 The group on the trans pennine trail



Figure 7 Our mechanic Chris changing a puncture at the side of the road



Figure 8 Smiles on arriving at Southport!

Feedback continued

Yvonne Fitzgerald- Active Women

I would just like to Thank you and all the team at Bike Right for a great day last Thursday (28th August 2014).

Riding all the way to Southport was a first for me. Taking the route along the Trans Pennine way was also a first. So felt I had really done something worthwhile at the end of the ride.

All the team worked really hard, all day, to ensure all us cyclists were safe and enjoyed the experience.

At the start of this year, I along with a lot of people rode now and again but here I am with two really good rides under my belt (Liverpool to Chester and Liverpool to Southport) thanks to Bike Right.

I can't thank you all enough for all your encouragement.

THANK YOU once again.